

Elementary English

A Magazine of the Language Arts

MAY, 1959

READING

WRITING

SPEAKING

LISTENING

SPELLING

ENGLISH USAGE

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

RADIO AND
TELEVISION

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

POETRY

CREATIVE
WRITING

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

LISTENING

CRITICAL READING IN BASAL READERS

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES



Stop it Moppit! By Geraldine Ross.
(Whittlesey). See p. 357.

*Organ of the National Council
of Teachers of English*

Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
704 S. Sixth St., Champaign, Ill.

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, *Editor*
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

(Send all editorial communications to 300 Gregory Hall, The University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

Presidents

Joseph Mersand

First Vice President

Ruth Strickland

Second Vice President

G. Robert Carlsen

Elementary Section

Elizabeth Guilfoile

High School Section

Hardy Finch

College Section

George Arms

Past Presidents

Helen Mackintosh

Brice Harris

•

ELEMENTARY SECTION COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Guilfoile

Chairman

Joan Carey (1960)

Irwin Suloway (1960)

Katherine Koch (1959)

Harry W. Sartain

Ferne Shipley

•

*Executive Secretary
of the Council*

J. N. Hook

MAY, 1959

TABLE OF CONTENTS

289	Children's Literature and Children's Literacy SHELTON L. ROOT, JR.
294	Meeting Individual Reading Needs RUTH V. MCCREARY
297	Studies in Listening—A Postscript PAUL A. WITTY AND ROBERT A. SIZEMORE
302	Appreciation of Picturesque Language ROBERT HILLENBRAND
305	Experiment with Cross-Class Grouping L. E. AARON, FRANCES GOODWIN, AND VADA KENT
308	Getting A Child Ready to Read NAOMI GILPATRICK
311	When Children Praise A Book REA CLARK
314	Using Literature to Extend Experiences ROBERT BONE
319	Comic Books <i>vs.</i> Story Books VERA SLOVER
323	Critical Reading in Basic Readers GERTRUDE WILLIAMS
331	Reading Achievements of Early and Late Starters RICHARD S. HAMPLEMAN
335	Individualized Reading Instruction RUSSELL G. STAUFFER
342	Periodicals for Children and Youth THOMAS D. HORN
345	Councilleter HELEN K. MACKINTOSH
347	Windows on The World Edited by IRIS VINTON
350	The Educational Scene Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS
356	Books for Children Edited by MABEL F. ALTSTETTER AND MARGARET MARY CLARK

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly October through May by the National Council of Teachers of English, 704 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. Subscription rate \$4.00 per year. Single copy 65 cents. Postage is prepaid on all orders for the United States (and all other countries with the same postage rates). Extra postage is charged for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union at the rate of 24 cents per annual subscription (total \$4.24). Remittances should be made payable to the National Council of Teachers of English by check, money order, or bank draft. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when the losses have been sustained in transit, when the request for the missing number is made during the month following the month of publication, and when the reserve stock will permit. All business communications regarding orders, subscription, single copies, and advertising should be addressed to the National Council of Teachers of English, 704 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois. All manuscripts and correspondence about the contents of the magazine should be addressed to ELEMENTARY ENGLISH, Dr. J. J. DeBoer, Room 300, Gregory Hall, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942 at the post office in Champaign, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

Copyright, 1959, by THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH.

Printed in the U.S.A.

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

XXXVI

MAY, 1959

No. 5

SHELTON L. ROOT, JR.

Children's Literature and Children's Literacy

To help children achieve literacy, children's literature must be removed from the position of splendid isolation which it now occupies in far too many classrooms. Teachers, as they attempt to educate for literacy, need to take into consideration at least three forces which are becoming increasingly more influential: First, the direction now being taken by a few programs of reading instruction. Second, the increasing importance of communications media other than print. Third, and corollary to the first two, the inevitable broadening of the definitions of the terms *literacy* and *literature*.

It is true that these factors are, to some small extent, influencing the present handling of children's literature. However, these same three factors will most assuredly influence the design of tomorrow's entire elementary school curriculum. An examination of the relationship between children's literature and reading instruction, and between children's literature and mass-media literacy may help reveal some of the vital components of the task of educating for literacy.

Children's literature and reading instruction. It has become quite apparent that nearly everyone—children, teachers,

and lay public—is dissatisfied, for one reason or another, with the reading program as it manifests itself in most public schools. The ineffectualness of present reading programs is, in part, the result of the following factors:

Instruction has not recognized the extremely important role played by individual differences in terms of readiness and ability to read. Nearly all schools have used the group as the basic unit to be instructed. This seems rather amazing when the fact is recognized that nearly all of the methods of group instruction have been devised by reading experts whose own experiences have come primarily from clinical situations in which they have worked on a one-to-one basis with single individuals. Often the methods which the reading experts devised for this one-to-one experience were extrapolated and assumed to be appropriate to group situations, thus ignoring the obvious fact that learning is, in final analysis, accomplished by individuals rather than groups.

Instruction has not recognized the role which interest in content can play in

Dr. Root is Assistant Professor of Children's Literature at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

motivating the learner to read. Interest in content, with the exception of some beginning experience-chart reading programs, has been largely ignored. The usually unspoken assumption upon which most reading instruction is based is that motivation comes not from the child's interest in the content of "what" is to be read, but rather the motivation comes from the child's desire to learn, in the abstract, "how" to read. The result of this assumption has been the almost universal adoption of the basal reader as the prime instrument of instruction. And, just to the degree that any basal reading series becomes universal, so is it apt to lose its appeal, content-wise, to any particular individual. For, in their effort to write readers with mass appeal, authors tend toward a blandness of content which approaches, when it fails to reach, insipidness.

Instruction has not been directed at developing readers who have any high degree of appreciation for what they read. In fact, instruction has not had as its major objective the encouragement of any kind of reading other than text materials. This approach has put extreme emphasis on reading as a narrowly defined, utilitarian skill—a skill to be exercised by the individual student almost exclusively on textbook materials.

The success of any type of reading instruction program may be best measured, not by standardized reading tests which reveal the numbers of children in any given situation who are reading "up to grade level" but, rather, by the number of children who are reading because they want to read and because they find personal satisfaction in reading. It has been said that

"the purpose of instructing children to read is not to have children who *can* read, it is to have children who *do* read." Contemporary reading instruction has not been highly successful in producing large numbers of children of the latter variety.

To bring about a change and an improvement in the program of reading instruction in the elementary schools, some individuals and a few school systems have launched what have come to be known as individualized programs of reading instruction. Though it is too early to present much statistical evidence to support such programs, nearly all present indications appear to justify far greater efforts in this direction. The individualized reading programs which have been started vary greatly in detail, but all have two common elements which markedly differentiate them from the traditional program. First, it is the individual rather than the group that is the focus of instructional attention. Second, the primary objective of reading instruction is to bring about in the learner the ability to comprehend, appreciate, and enjoy reading as a worthwhile and intrinsically rewarding experience.

Under traditional practices the teacher addresses his instruction to a group. Then, when individuals within the group fail to respond to group instruction, they are singled out by the teacher for individual attention. The purpose of this attention is, to be consistent with the whole theory of group instruction, to fit the individual back into a group. If the individual cannot be fitted back into the group from which he is removed, then he is fitted into a group which is not as far advanced in its reading skills as was the one from which he was originally taken. The teacher who

is unsuccessful at the task of keeping his students within a manageable number of groups, usually three, becomes almost automatically a failure as a reading teacher.

If the materials of instruction are examined, it is apparent why at least partial failure is nearly always inevitable. All of the important tools of instruction in the traditional program are designed to serve and be used with groups of children. Paradoxically, the methods or techniques of instruction used in the traditional reading program, while not being wholly satisfactory in the light of present knowledge for individual instruction, were, nonetheless, originated for the purpose of individual instruction and subsequently employed to instruct children *en mass*.

The resultant combination of these two factors—tools of group instruction (basal reading series) and techniques of individual instruction (traditional teaching methods)—places the entire traditional reading instruction program in a pedagogically inconsistent and fundamentally untenable position. To correct this situation one of two lines of action must be taken. First, methods of instruction must be developed which are truly methods of *group* instruction and which will actually implement the use of the basal reader—thus arriving at a program of group instruction which is, at least, internally consistent. Or, second, the existing methods of individual instruction, with some improvement, must be exercised in concert with materials appropriate to individual instruction—thus arriving at a program equipped for and oriented toward the instruction of individual children.

It is conceivably possible that, with the

use of a combination of the more recently developed teaching aids, an effective program of group reading instruction could be developed. However, it seems somewhat unlikely since any program of group instruction would probably be unable to take into adequate consideration such factors as individual differences in learning ability and interest. The second alternative, suggested above, appears to be far more promising.

Any program based on the premise that the methods and materials of reading instruction must have as their primary function the instruction of individuals in the art of reading places literature, for the first time, legitimately in the elementary-school classroom. Literature then becomes one of the major tools of instruction. That this fact both simplifies and complicates the teacher's role can be seen by examining four of the major differences between programs of individual and group instruction.

Group Instruction

To maintain a manageable program the teacher is compelled to keep his students divided among a minimum number of groups.

• • •

The selection of reading materials is a relatively simple matter. Only gross differences in text difficulty need be determined since there are seldom more than three basal texts to choose among.

• • •

The teacher plays the dominant role in deciding what particular basal text will be used by any given individual, since mechanical difficulty of text is the sole criterion for selection.

• • •

Relatively few books for the purposes of reading instruction need be provided any given classroom inasmuch as basal readers are usually arranged linearly in terms of

text difficulty and programs of instruction are based on a "logical" progression from the mastery of the mechanically simple to the mastery of the mechanically more complex. Therefore, the books must be consumed page-by-page, step-by-step, from beginning to end.

Individual Instruction

Students do not become relatively permanent members of permanent reading groups. The teacher organizes *ad hoc* groups for specific and short-range purposes, then dissolves these groups when their functions have been accomplished.

* * *

The selection of reading materials is a complex problem, inasmuch as both the difficulty of text materials and the interests of the individual reader in content must be considered.

* * *

The individual plays a co-equal role with the teacher in determining what he will read, since both mechanical difficulty of text and content interest are equally important in the selection of reading materials.

* * *

Large number of books must be provided for the purposes of reading instruction inasmuch as reader interest in content and self selection are important elements of this program. Therefore, great numbers of books must be made available for use. These books must not only take into account the mechanical reading ability of all the individuals in a class, but must also encompass the reading interest of all the members of a class.

There are other matters, such as program organization, which must be considered in the development of individualized reading instruction. Those mentioned above, however, are of major concern in any discussion of the contribution which children's literature may have to make to reading instruction. Also, they indicate quite strongly that a much closer relationship than is now common must be

established between the mechanics of reading instruction and the literary content of the instructional materials.

Children's literature and multi-media literacy. Instruction in the area of children's literature must, to become contemporary with developments in the field of communications, reconsider the definition of the terms *literature* and *literate*. Commonly, these two terms have come to have the following connotations:

LITERATURE, a general term which, in default of precise definition, may stand for the best expression of the best thought reduced to writing.¹

LITERATE, having a knowledge of letters; able to read and write.²

Since these definitions developed in a society which, during the past several hundred years, has been essentially "print-bound" they served as adequate bases for instruction in the field of literature. The medium of print did in the past, with the notable exception of drama, directly convey "the best expression of the best thought" to its audience. It was, therefore, only essential that the medium of print be considered in the development of literacy. However, print no longer is the sole conveyor of "the best thinking." Sight and/or sound recordings and live television, radio, and theatre have now emerged as extremely important media through which the "best thinking" may be conveyed to its audience. These media, though they still depend for the most part on print to convey the originator's ideas to them, translate print into sight and/or sound for the

¹"Literature," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (14th ed.), XIV, 206.

²Charles Earle Funk (ed.), *New College Standard Dictionary* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1947), p. 696.

consumer. The resultant translation takes on many attributes which the original print did not have and, consequently, demands that the intelligent consumer have more than print-literacy. This means that educators must concern themselves with developing within the youth of this society of kind of "multi-media literacy." It means that just as the individual is brought to an awareness and appreciation of print, so must he be educated to understand and critically interact with other media of communication.

To develop multi-media literacy, the concept of children's literature needs to be expanded to include those literary media which do not depend primarily on print. Such an expansion would demand a broadening of the meaning of the terms *literature* and *literate*. Already there is a large body of "non-print" literature which is available to children. These provide experiences which are closely akin to those which children have previously been able to have only through reading. In the past, when instruction has considered this non-print literature at all, there has been a marked tendency to consider it as inferior to print literature. Seldom have teachers viewed non-print literature in terms of its own integral literary worth for children. However, these non-print forms have come to occupy such a position of importance that they can hardly be either overlooked or considered merely as auxiliary

to print.

One other liberty must be taken with the term literature if instruction for multi-media literacy is to be reasonably adequate. Literature must be so defined as not to exclude those materials for children which are not absolute "expressions of the best thought." In the past the very term, "children's literature," has conjured up visions of the finest writing, as judged by adult literary standards, for children. The effect of this pure definition has been somewhat marked. Often, the books for children which were obviously not "true literature" were either not considered at all, or they were considered but briefly on the way toward an examination of the children's classics. Most certainly, the teacher should know and understand the importance of the truly great children's literature—but this should be only one aspect of a well-balanced program of instruction. The teacher needs also to understand that anything which will help lead the child toward multi-media literacy is legitimate content-matter for the school curriculum.

Here, then, have been presented several facets of two questions which educators might well consider. Can we help children achieve a high level of print literacy as long as we continue to place overwhelming emphasis on basal reading programs? Can we expect to educate for Twentieth Century literacy as long as we largely ignore the non-print literary media?

Over 54,000 Kansas School Children in grades four through nine have named *Old Yeller*, by Fred Gipson, author and Texas farmer, the 1959 winner of the William Allen White Children's Book Award. The total num-

ber of votes, which has tripled since the program began in 1953, cast this year by Kansas School Children is 20,000 above that of any other year.

Meeting Individual Reading Needs

Meeting the individual needs of every child so that he can learn to read according to his potential ability is the philosophy of the reading program which began at Wooster, Ohio in the fall of 1950.

While children of to-day are reading more and better than ever before, the changing times demand constant improvement in reading skills.

Child studies over the past thirty years furnish evidence that the main causes of reading difficulties are: immaturity at the beginning stage, emotional disturbances, low intelligence, physical defects, absenteeism, changing schools, mass education, lack of up-to-date books as well as other instructional aids, and faulty teaching.

The initial step toward reading improvement in the Wooster schools was the administering of a survey reading test,¹ to all pupils in grades two through six. The results of this test brought out the fact that while the majority of the pupils were average and above in ability, there were many reading problems among the approximately 1500 children enrolled at that time. Some were retarded from two to four years.

In order to reach as many children as possible, individual remedial instruction was started in the sixth grade, so that these pupils would have a better foundation before going on to junior high school. There was no instruction provided on that level at the beginning of the program. In 1957,

Miss McCreary is Reading and Curriculum Supervisor in the Wooster, Ohio, schools.

a full time reading improvement teacher was added to the junior high school staff.

Since there were so many children in need of help when the program began, the pupils with the highest I.Q.'s were considered first. We felt that they would profit most and the length of instruction would be shorter than for those who learned more slowly.

During the first year of the program in grades three through five, the pupils receiving remedial instruction were divided into small groups of five or six each. These children had three half-hour periods of group teaching each week while those having individual help were given two half-hour periods every week. Pupils were excused from their classroom for this special work. The remedial teacher travels between buildings.

Various remedial techniques and materials were tried out. Pupils receiving individual teaching were given the Gates Reading Diagnostic Test.² With the help of this test, reading difficulties were diagnosed, the instructional level was found, and a special program was worked out for each child.

After experimenting with many materials the following have been found to be effective: a 7 x 8½ spiral notebook for recording examples of the letter sounds,³

¹California Reading Test, California Test Bureau, 5916 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles 28, California.

²Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th Street, N.Y. 27, New York.

³Phonic Talking Letters, #262, Ideal School Supply Company, Harry M. Ward, Bryan, Ohio.

words missed on the Dolch Basic Sight Word list,⁴ the Webster Word Wheels,⁵ words that the child confuses, such as 'went' and 'want' and new words to be learned. "Eye and Ear Fun" phonics series,⁶ by Clarence Stone and "Spelling Magic,"⁷ by William Kottmeyer, are used by each pupil according to his reading level and special needs. "Functional Phonetics,"⁸ a series of three books by Dr. Anna D. Cordts, are used by all pupils. Each child has a reader on his instructional level and a library book on his independent reading level for pleasure reading.

As soon as the pupil has mastered the Dolch list and has developed some independent word attack ability he is ready to enjoy the Dolch "Basic Vocabulary Series,"⁹ the "Cowboy Sam," and "Buttons" books.¹⁰ The "I Want to Be" books,¹¹ by Carla Greene, encourage independent reading at beginner's level. Supplementary primers from various reading series also furnish good practice material at this stage.

With the average and above average pupil, the remedial course of instruction is continued until the classroom teacher feels that the pupil is ready to go on his own at his grade level. Children often show a gain of two or three levels with a few months teaching.

If the pupil is slow-learning and his I.Q. is such that he may never bridge the gap between his reading achievement and grade placement as he advances through school, the individual instruction may continue on through junior high school or until he is old enough to obtain a working permit. Since the reading program has been extended into the junior high school, we are taking care of the type of pupil

who will not be able to do the scholastic work in the senior high school; but he is having the enriching experience of working with pupils of his own age with differing abilities. This will help him to understand and adjust to the individual differences that exist among all children and adults. A great deal can be learned by listening, observing, and participating even if there is a wide range of abilities in the group.

In the junior high school reading improvement program some teaching is done in small groups in addition to the individual help. The type of instruction depends upon the special needs of each pupil. In the elementary grades all special reading instruction outside the regular classroom is done individually.

We have no special classes but we have special reading teachers to help the classroom teacher take care of the individual needs of the pupils. We have found that the needs of all types of children can best be met through partial segregation from the regular classroom.

Programs explaining how reading is being taught and how children learn to read are given for clubs and P.T.A. groups.

A fall and spring "Book Fair" is held annually.

Classroom libraries have been estab-

⁴The Garrard Press, Champaign, Illinois.

⁵Webster Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁶Webster Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁷Webster Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁸Benefic Press, Chicago, Illinois.

⁹The Garrard Press, Champaign, Illinois.

¹⁰Benefic Press, Chicago, Illinois.

¹¹Children's Press, Chicago, Illinois.

lished. New books are added each year. The importance of children's literature was stressed through a series of radio quiz programs, "Books are Fun." It was given each spring for three years, beginning in 1952. The manager of the local radio station was master of ceremonies. Members of the American Association of University Women assisted with this program by acting as judges and helping with transportation.

Supplementary books with a wide range of reading levels have been added to every classroom.

Teachers are encouraged to study the special needs of their pupils and to take care of individual differences by grouping and projects in addition to individual attention and referral to the reading supervisor for help with special problems.

The above-average pupil is not neglected. He, too, is provided with reading material at his particular level.

A summer school was conducted for the first three years of the program in order to reach some of those who could not be included in the regular school schedule. This type of group instruction is no longer necessary. However, individual instruction is available at a nominal fee during the summer for those children who seem to need additional work.

Our reading problems continue to diminish each year. All children in the special reading program which includes grades three through eight and a few senior high school pupils receive instruction in small groups or have individual help. We take care of about two hundred cases during the school term and about thirty additional pupils during the summer. Since there are now over 2000 chil-

dren enrolled, we feel that the number of reading problems is low in proportion to the normal expectancy for an enrollment of this size.

We find that pupils are upgrading each year. The majority are well above the norm on the California Achievement Test which is given every spring.

Children coming from other schools who have been labeled non-readers, all learn to read when given our special reading course. While many examples could be cited, one of the most recent cases is that of a boy who entered one of our sixth grades in 1956, with an all 'F' report card. He was thirteen years old and had just been transferred from grade to grade as the family moved about the country. A Stanford-Binet test showed that he had average ability. We knew that he could learn to read; so an individual program was worked out for him. Tommy had to start at pre-primer level; but he was eager to learn. He was accepted by the sixth graders and the teacher gave him as much individual attention as he could. He had two half-hour lessons with the special reading teacher every week. He was very restless and nervous at first but soon overcame his fear. Tommy wanted to read and in a short time was asking for a library book to take home. By the end of the term, tests showed that he had gone from pre-primer to third grade level. He was retained in the sixth grade to help him build vocabulary and to get a better foundation in reading. He had individual instruction during the summer and made satisfactory progress in the sixth grade the following year. He is now making passing grades in the junior high school. He will continue to receive reading instruction

with the junior high school reading improvement teacher.

This boy took part in the summer recreation program and was co-builder of a "silver nosed rocket ship" for stunt night. If the school had not taken an interest in Tommy, he could have developed a bitter feeling toward all school activities. We feel that delinquency in the form of vandalism and other acts of law breaking can best be combated by reaching children before they become problems.

Truancy has been reduced to a minimum. We try not to neglect anyone and to make everyone feel that he belongs.

A half-time special reading teacher was assigned to the program in 1954. Be-

cause of the expanding enrollment this was increased to a full-time teacher in 1955. The enrollment continues to grow and adjoining school districts are being added to the system, so two full-time elementary teachers and a junior high school teacher in addition to the reading supervisor are a part of the reading program for 1958 and 1959.

Many examples can be given of pupils who were greatly retarded at the beginning of the program, but with individualized instruction have shown great improvement. These former pupils are now earning their living as useful law-abiding citizens.

PAUL A. WITTY
AND
ROBERT A. SIZEMORE

Studies in Listening - A Postscript

In three articles, we reviewed the experimental studies on listening as a way of learning. Differences in the efficiency of learning, it was discovered, could be traced, not to the particular type of presentation such as the visual or auditory, but instead to factors such as the nature of the task to be mastered, the types of material to be dealt with, the age of the subjects, and the influence exerted by interest or past experience. It was found, of course, that effective learning could take place through different sensory avenues—in some cases with equal success through two or more approaches or combinations of approaches. It was found, too, that the results of studies were often contradictory or conflicting.

The argument concerning whether listening is superior to reading as a way of learning is in some respects a futile one. It has become clear that reading will never be replaced by listening since reading enables us to achieve certain goals that cannot be realized through listening. Reading materials provide records which can be studied, reviewed, and reexamined—acts that are essential in acquiring some complex skills or understandings. Moreover, both silent and oral reading have other values which are not only distinctive but also rewarding to the student.

Listening too has some unique char-

Dr. Witty is Professor of Education at Northwestern University. Dr. Sizemore is a member of the faculty of the University of Toledo.

acteristics. Through listening the student may experience satisfactions in hearing beautiful phrases and artistic expression; he may enhance his appreciation of poetry, drama, and various forms of literature; he may grow increasingly discriminating in evaluating the language he hears and thereby extend and improve his own usage; he may become better able to recall information and ideas which are reinforced by listening as part of a multi-sensory approach; he may learn to react critically and thereby become increasingly selective as he learns. Since the foregoing acquisitions are in large part products of skillful teaching, it is clear that most pupils should receive systematic instruction in listening.

Writers such as Harold Anderson (1), Althea Beery (2), James Brown (3), Ralph Nichols (14), and Miriam Wilt (19) have stressed the fact that of all the communication skills, listening has received the smallest amount of instructional time. Yet it has been pointed out repeatedly that listening consumes a very large proportion of time in the daily lives of children and adults. For example, Paul Rankin (16) requested adults to keep a daily record of communicative activities—reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In 1926, he reported that 42 per cent of their time was given to listening, 32 per cent to talking, 15 per cent to reading, and 11 per cent to writing. In 1929, the results were respectively 47, 28, 17, and 7 per cent. About two decades later, in 1950, Miriam Wilt (19) found that children devoted an even larger share of their time to listening—57.5 per cent of classroom time. Other investigations have yielded somewhat similar results.

The advent of TV has increased the amount of time children and youth spend in listening. Paul Witty reports that children now average upwards of twenty hours per week with TV. They also give considerable time to radio listening as well as to other activities which involve listening. Accordingly it seems that greater attention should now be given to instruction and guidance in listening.

We pointed out in foregoing articles that relatively few reliable studies of the effectiveness of listening have as yet been made. In fact it has been estimated that several thousand studies are available in the field of reading as compared with less than one hundred in listening. Moreover, relatively few of the latter offer much help to the classroom teacher. It should be stated, however, that good teachers have always emphasized listening and that listening has, as a component of the learning process, received attention, to varying degrees, in efficient instruction in the past as at the present time. Much of this effort has not involved planned instruction. Certainly, it seems that teachers today should give increased attention to the role of listening in their daily schedules.

Several writers have offered helpful suggestions to aid teachers in the cultivation of more adequate listening habits and skills in the classroom. These writers have stressed the importance of the attitude of the pupil and his need for help in adjusting his listening skills to different types of presentations; they have emphasized the role of the teacher in preparing the way or setting the stage for different kinds of listening; and they have cited the importance of checking, evaluating, and guiding the pupils' development. For ex-

ample, Althea Beery makes the following suggestions:

Choose appropriate opportunities for listening in terms of pupils' interests and needs and commensurate with their ability to understand.

Provide an atmosphere conducive to listening; seat young children close to the speaker.

Discuss with pupils the factors that make a good listener; encourage them to set for themselves appropriate standards for listening.

Help children learn *when* to listen, *what* to listen to, and *how* to listen.

Utilize every-day class activities to develop more alert listening.

Provide children with the necessary background or readiness for each listening activity.

Place emphasis upon *what* is said rather than upon errors in usage.

Encourage pupils to demand meaning in what they hear; urge them to ask for explanations when they do not understand.

Check possible misinterpretation through questioning.

Place emphasis on precision of vocabulary; help children distinguish between homonyms; explain new terms immediately.

Provide, when appropriate, for interaction of the speaker and group during the listening period.

When practical, see that action or interpretation follows listening.

Help children evaluate what they hear; guide older children to discount bursts of oratory in searching for essential ideas.

Help older elementary children note how phrasing, pausing, and transitional words punctuate oral speech and aid the listener.

Check cases of inattention for defective hearing; compensate by advantageous seating.

As a teacher, exemplify good listening habits yourself.

Be consistent in the formation of listening habits.

Have a means of checking to see whether children have listened. (2, pp. 70-71)

Edgar Dale is another writer who has offered helpful advice concerning listening; moreover, he warns against presenting too many or too complex materials or situations. Listening would be improved on many occasions, he believes, if only one idea or point was presented or stressed at a time.

We don't listen because we are fed up. Too many people are firing too many different ideas at us. We can't absorb them that fast. A poor speaker covers ten points. A good speaker *uncovers* one. (7, p. 2)

Dale suggests, too, that listening periods that are long and unbroken often give students "little chance to reflect." Hence, teachers should consider the demands of different listening situations, and plan periods of listening of appropriate length. Discrimination should be employed too in deciding whether materials are better learned through reading than through listening.

Is the . . . speaker presenting new ideas unavailable in textbooks . . . ? Or could the student get this information more effectively by reading it outside of class? Our classrooms must not be places where students practice inattentive listening to repetitious discussion. (7, p. 4)

Preparation for listening to different types of presentations is essential, and the most advantageous background or "set" should be devised. At times, the pupil should be led to listen with a questioning attitude similar to that which characterizes a news reporter. Again Dale suggests:

A good listener has mastered some of the skills of a good reporter. A reporter approaches an expert with questions in mind—not the kind of superficial, amateurish, hackneyed questions you sometimes hear on television interviews, but questions that have grown out of reading and study. (7, p. 2)

Bernice Freeman also emphasizes the importance of preparation in developing better listening habits as well as the significance of the interest factor.

We listen to what we are interested in; hence we should broaden our interests. This can be done by keeping up with current events, by wide reading, and by attempting to connect what we hear with something we are already interested in. (12, p. 575)

Many writers recommend the discriminating use of films as a basis for the improvement of listening. The writers of this article already have referred briefly to the role of films in teaching listening, and have stressed the potentialities of approaches which utilize films and film-readers. For example, Paul Witty and James Fitzwater (20) have described ways in which the seeing of films may be combined with reading of film readers and the writing and hearing of scripts projected through the magnetic sound track or on tape. Films such as Arne Suckdorff's *The Hunter and the Forest*, *Adventures of the Baby Fox*, and *A Tale of the Fiords* distributed by Encyclopedia Britannica Films, offer excellent opportunities for training in listening. Teachers' guides which give detailed suggestions for cultivating skill in listening and writing are provided for these films.

It should be kept in mind that in using certain films pupils should be encouraged to listen for various purposes and in different ways. It is appropriate at times for pupils to listen largely for pleasure with little attention to organizing facts or ideas. At other times, it is desirable to view a film in order to observe certain facts or note certain outcomes. On some occasions, pupils should give special attention to the

commentaries and examine their validity. Pupils should be encouraged also to attend to details, to note controversial items presented in certain films, and to observe the concepts introduced. When closed circuit TV is employed, it is highly desirable to prepare students for successful viewing through previous training or guidance in listening to various types of subject matter.

The responsibility of the teacher is great in offering help and guidance to students as they learn to listen with increasing effectiveness. It is obvious too that the teacher should cultivate appropriate habits of listening, and should provide abundant and varied opportunities for pupils to be heard. Ralph G. Nichols and Leonard A. Stevens offer helpful counsel for the teacher in the volume entitled *Are You Listening?* (14)

Additional suggestions for classroom activities involving listening are to be found in textbooks such as Ruth Strickland's *The Language Arts in the Elementary School* (18). The volumes prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English: *The English Language Arts* (4), *Language Arts for Today's Children* (5), and *The English Language Arts in the Secondary School* (6) contain pertinent suggestions too. A particularly helpful list of activities is found in an article written by Margaret J. Early (10), in which she cites activities that may foster improvement in purposeful, critical, and appreciative listening. Additional suggestions for elementary school teachers are to be found in articles by Sam Duker (9), Ruth Korey (13), and Margaret Parke (15). With adaptation, some of the activities cited by Earl Dias (8), Bernice Freeman (12), and Ollie Stratton (17) could be used

profitably by elementary teachers. Similarly, teachers will find pertinent suggestions in Seth Fessenden's speaker-listener workbook, *Designed for Listening* (11).

In this article we have cited a few of the sources to which classroom teachers may turn in efforts to improve listening habits, skills, and attitudes. It is to be hoped that the present tendency to offer instruction in listening will find increased acceptance in schools throughout our country.

Bibliography

The following have been referred to in the text and are recommended for further reading:

1. Anderson, Harold. "Teaching the Art of Listening." *The School Review*, LVII, 63-67, February, 1949.
2. Beery, Althea. "Listening Activities in the Elementary School." *Elementary English*, XXIII, 67-69, (February, 1946).
3. Brown, James I. "Why Not Teach Listening?" *School and Society*, LXIX, 113-116, (February 12, 1949).
4. The Commission on the English Curriculum. *The English Language Arts*. National Council of Teachers of English. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952.
5. *Language Arts for Today's Children*. National Council of Teachers of English. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954.
6. *The English Language Arts in the Secondary School*. National Council of Teachers of English. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956.
7. Dale, Edgar. "Why Don't We Listen?" *The News Letter of the Bureau of Educational Research*. Ohio State University, XXII, No. 5 (February, 1957).
8. Dias, Earl J. "Three Levels of Listening." *English Journal*, XXXVI, 252-254, (May 1947).
9. Duker, Sam. "How Listening Can Be Taught." *Instructor*, LXIV, 35, 76 (May, 1955).
10. Early, Margaret J. "Suggestions for Teaching Listening." *Journal of Education*, CXXXVII, 17-20, (December 1954).
11. Fessenden, Seth. *Designed for Listening: A Speaker-Listener Workbook*. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1951.
12. Freeman, Bernice. "Listening Experiences in the Language Arts." *English Journal*, XXXVIII, 572-576 (December 1949).
13. Korey, Ruth A. "Teaching Children To Listen." *Instructor*, LVIII, 37 (October 1949).
14. Nichols, Ralph G. and Leonard A. Stevens. *Are You listening?* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957.
15. Parke, Margaret B. "Children's Ways of Talking and Listening." *Childhood Education*, XXIX, 223-230, (January, 1953).
16. Rankin, Paul T. "Listening Ability: Its Importance, Measurement and Development." *Chicago Schools Journal*, XII, 177-179, 417-420 (January, June, 1930).
17. Stratton, Ollie. "Techniques for Literate Listening." *English Journal*, XXXVIII, 542-544, (December, 1948).
18. Strickland, Ruth G. *The Language Arts in the Elementary School*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1958, Rev.
19. Wilt, Miriam E. "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education." *Journal of Educational Research*, XLIII, 626-636, (April 1950).
20. Witry, Paul A. and James Fitzwater. "An Experiment with Films, Film-Readers, and the Magnetic Sound Track Projector." *Elementary English*, XXX, 232-241 (April, 1953).

Just published: *Listening Aids Through the Grades. 190 Listening activities*. By David H. Russell and Elizabeth F. Russell. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. \$1.50.

The Appreciation of Picturesque Language in the Intermediate Grades

Current research reveals little description of the need for instruction in the reading, interpretation, and appreciation of picturesque language! However, a few writers have rather forcefully argued the merits of and place for picturesque language in the reading program. Many of these writings comment on the need for individuals to be able to interpret experiences found in literature and in turn be able to use it themselves as part of their own personal idiom.

I cannot help thinking of some of the soldiers' letters which I censored in the war: men trying to sort out the most desperate matters of love, divorce, infidelity, death and passion with only the language of the popular song and the cinema to help them. No amount of 'intelligent cinema going' would have made them any more competent to deal with their lives. If they had read the *Bible* and *Pilgrim's Progress* and known a number of folk-songs, like most of the rural population before the newspapers and cinemas came, they would have coped better. And so they would have, too, if their teachers had shown sensitivity to their language and to the thoughts and feelings they expressed in words when they were in schools.¹

There is naturally some comment on how children can be taught to select good literature and, in turn, thereby be exposed to selected picturesque language.

The short answer to the question, 'What is good literature for children?' is an obvious statement always needing re-emphasis: good literature for children is first of all, good literature. The fairy tales

of Anderson and Perrault are drastically simplified stories, but they share common characteristics with 'Paradise Lost' and 'The Brothers Karamazov.' In fact, values such as dramatic story and vivid action are heightened rather than lessened in the juvenile tales. The child's book should, if anything, be more exquisite in art with a more direct appeal to the keener sensations of childhood. This being true, the best book for a child may be read with aesthetic pleasure by his parents.²

Robert G. Wood, of the University of Omaha, in a charming article "Let 'em Read Trash," argues for a random non-selective type of approach to literature and picturesque language. It should be carefully noted that the pieces of literature named by Professor Wood are, of course, not trash, for he is arguing for the value of experience gained by reading imaginative and colorful literature.

.... Did the fights of the cannibals in *Robinson Crusoe*, the robbers in *Hans Brinker*, the bloodshed of *Treasure Island*, the devouring of the ass by the boaconstructor in *Swiss Family Robinson*, the murder of Dr. Robinson in *Tom Sawyer*, the brimstone-and-fire appearance of Old Nick coming after the wicked blacksmith in *Uncle Remus*, the grisly picture of the hanged knights in Arthur Rackham's *King Arthur for Boys*; did these poison your childhood sleep and wreck your nervous system?³

¹David Holbrook, "Relish for Language," *The Journal of Education*, August, 1957. P. 340.

²Lawrence H. Maddock, "What is Good Literature for Children," *Elementary English*, May, 1957. P. 298.

³Robert G. Wood, "Let 'em Read Trash," *Elementary English*, November, 1957. P. 444.

Mr. Hillenbrand teaches in the schools of St. Charles, Illinois.

Research has revealed a definite connection between the reading or experiencing of picturesque or dramatic situations and the ability to write creatively. In a study made by Paul Witty and William Martin in which children were shown the film *The Hunter in the Forest*, the picture had no narration or dialogue, but did include a musical score with sound effects to accompany the appearance of birds and animals. The children were later invited to write their own stories about the film.

Witty and Martin, upon analyzing the stories, found that there was a greater superiority of writing skill by the fifth and sixth grade pupils who responded more frequently to the symbolism and quite often expressed their interpretations of the film. They used metaphors frequently and showed greater originality in their choice of words and phrases. It was further noticed that at this level, there was a higher incidence of writing of a distinctive merit.⁴

There is little in research literature on the techniques of appreciation of descriptive language in literature. There are in the educational writings directions to teachers to encourage children's creative responses to literature. This may be done through interpretive oral reading, reporting, choral reading, or original stories and poems. Sometimes the most vivid experiences and impressions from reading can be caught in color and line—in pictures, dioramas, and roller movies. Leland B. Jacobs lists seven points on how to bring

the enjoyment of literature into the school. "How to Bring Children and Literature Together"⁵

1. We can read to children.
2. We can acquaint children with books new to them.
3. We can have available a balanced collection of literature.
4. We can use multi-sensory resources concomitantly.
5. We can encourage children's creative responses to literature.
6. We can relate literature to other school experiences.
7. We can evaluate individual growth in reading preferences and directions.

An analysis of two series of teachers manuals for the intermediate grades gives some ideas on what to stress and illustrate in the teaching of an appreciation of descriptive language.⁶

The major points have been compiled and summarized and where needed, brief examples are here given to illustrate the particular language concept.

1. Enjoying puns: Develop understanding that puns are made by using words of the same sound but different meanings or different applications.
"There's nothing worse than raining cats and dogs unless it's hailing a streetcar."
"You shouldn't tell secrets in a cornfield because it has so many ears."
2. Reacting to specific word meaning: Contrast the mental imagery evoked by different words.
He (cut, slashed) the bark of the tree.
She (stopped, hesitated) at the door.

⁵Leland B. Jacobs, "Enjoy Literature at School," *Education*, January 1958, P. 259.

⁶William S. Gray, Scott Foresman Co. reading series. The intermediate titles for the 1955 edition of this series are listed in the bibliography. Paul Witty, et al D. C. Heath Co. reading series. The intermediate titles for the 1955 edition of this series listed in bibliography.

⁴Paul Witty and William Martin, "An Analysis of Children's Compositions Written in Response to a Film," *Elementary English*, March, 1957, Vol. 34, P. 158-163.

3. Oral interpretation: Skim the story with children, helping them note descriptive words and phrases that give clues to how certain passages should be read to bring out the meaning. For example, the words "sharp with sudden cold" and "turning the leaves to bright silver" should be read in such a way that the listener forms an image of a crisp, calm evening.
4. Find words and phrases that prompt images:
as free as the wind, frisky colts, lively animals.
5. Identify words used to create an impression:
sly, sneaking, greedy eyes shone cruelly, filled with fresh terror, fierce hunting cry.
6. Identify figurative language: Sentences in which things are described by saying they are like another thing. as red as fire, as yellow as gold.
7. Forming and reacting to sensory images:
Then the trail grew rockier and steeper.
(What does *grew* mean in this sentence? Have you ever seen a steep, rocky trail?)
They tramped off again.
What kind of gait does this sentence help you see? How is tramping different from just walking?)
8. Teaching about simile:
buzzed like bees swarming from a hive
9. Promoting creative expression: suggest that pupils try their hands at writing articles about improvements that could be made in their own school or community—improvements requiring their cooperation. Superior pupils might do an effective job of following Ben Franklin's pattern and taking a humorous approach to a serious subject.
10. Reacting to specific word meanings: call attention to words that are synonymous, or nearly so, in certain contexts.
Joe sat down on a nearby chair. Then change *sat* to *slumped* and ask, "What does the word *slumped* make you see that *sat* did not? What does *slumped* tell you about how Joe looked and felt?"
11. Interpreting figurative language:
Have you ever been a thorn in the side of a friend?
Have you ever worn a hangdog expression?
Would you enjoy being blackballed?
12. Using colloquial language:
a peach a of storm
on the beam
it's a humdinger
it's swell
beat me all hollow
13. Interpreting unusual expressions:
what was she up to
is done for
collect his thoughts
14. Appreciating descriptive, figurative, or picturesque language:
Perhaps you may want to read aloud some of the sentences to show children how phrasing, emphasis, and tone of voice contribute not only to the vividness of the images aroused but also to the pleasing sound of the author's language.
Then Frannie seemed to feel worried about something.
(Then an anxious look crept into Frannie's eyes.)
Mrs. Deal had lunch ready for the girls.
(His plump, jolly wife had a steaming pot of chicken stew. . . .)
15. Appreciating artistry in use of words: ask pupils to read orally paragraphs that contain descriptive phrases which enhance the suspense and the vividness of the story.
one mass of bloody foam
solid floor of ray fish
16. Distinguishing variations in meanings: colloquial speech, idioms. Discuss the phrases—tend store, fetching out, month of Sundays, and others which the children find. Call attention to the ungrammatical sentences in stories, and ask the class to tell why they are used.

I. E. AARON
FRANCES GOODWIN AND
VADA KENT

Fourth Grade Teachers Experiment With Cross-Class Grouping for Reading Instruction

After years of operating several reading groups within self-contained classrooms, the three fourth grade teachers of the Chase Street School, Athens, Georgia, decided to try a departmentalized approach to the teaching of reading. These teachers felt that they had been doing a satisfactory teaching job using three or four different reading groups within each classroom, but they were seeking an approach that would be more efficient in teaching children to read well.

The "cross-class" plan put into operation permitted reading throughout the three fourth grade classrooms to be scheduled for one hour each morning. The pupils were divided into six reading groups in accordance with their reading abilities, and each teacher taught two of the groups. Each day at the scheduled time, each child went to the room of the particular teacher who was assigned to teach his group. At the end of the reading period, he returned to his home room for the remainder of the school day.

The teachers planned to try out this approach over a period of six months, keeping records as accurately as they possibly could on progress made. They made no efforts toward rigid controls, but approached the project from the standpoint of teachers interested in trying out within their own classrooms a different instruc-

tional approach. It can be termed an action research approach to instructional improvement.

The three fourth grade classes consisted of 107 pupils. On the initial administration of the *California Reading Test*, they were found to range from 2.6 to 7.6 in reading grade placements, with a median reading grade placement of 4.4. The *California Test of Mental Maturity, Non-Language* section, showed a range of intelligence grade placements from 3.7 to 9.6, with a median of 6.4. As may be noted, the group was above average in ability.

Grouping was based upon previous records from former teachers, the *California Test of Mental Maturity*, the *California Reading Test*, informal inventories utilizing silent and oral reading from a number of reading texts, *Weekly Reader* tests, and teacher observation. Table 1 below shows the beginning grouping plan utilized. Groups were flexible, and shifts were made during the six-month period when teachers felt that children would

Dr. Aaron is Associate Professor and Director, Reading Clinic, College of Education, the University of Georgia. Miss Goodwin and Miss Kent are fourth grade teachers, Chase Street School, Athens, Georgia.

Appreciation is expressed to Mrs. Donna K. Rutland, who served with Miss Goodwin and Miss Kent as fourth grade teachers during the study period.

TABLE 1
GROUPING PLAN IN THE BEGINNING OF STUDY, 107 FOURTH GRADE PUPILS

Groups*	Teacher	Difficulty Level of Reading Text	Number of Pupils	Test Range for Pupils in Group
1	C	Difficult 4th**	17	4.4-7.6
2	A	Sec. Sem. 4th	19	4.1-6.0
3	B	First Sem. 4th	20	3.7-5.3
4	C	Sec. Sem. 3rd	18	3.1-4.3
5	B	First Sem. 3rd	18	2.9-4.2
6	A	2nd	15	2.8-3.7

*Highest group is labeled "1," and lowest group is labeled "2."

**Fourth grade reader more difficult than fourth readers used with groups 2 and 3.

benefit more by being in another group.

In dividing the groups among the three teachers, each teacher was given a group that could be instructed in the beginning in materials at fourth grade difficulty level. For example, Teacher A taught the lowest group, which started with a second reader, and next to the highest group, which started with a second semester fourth grade reader.

Basic readers used as the core material for each group came from several different series. As children in a particular group completed the text they were using, the teacher moved them into the next difficulty level in that same series.

Teachers noted that the result of the *California Reading Test* tended to overestimate by about one year the instructional level of the children. For example, the lowest group started out in a second grade difficulty level reader while they ranged from eight months in the second grade to seven months in the third grade on the reading test. This is one of the reasons why test data alone were not used for grouping the children.

In addition to basic texts used in each group, many other types of materials were utilized. These included library books in great quantities, experience charts, mimeo-

graphed materials for skill building, word booklets, dictionaries, and games and flash cards for word practice.

Teachers used the same techniques in working with their groups that they had used previously when they worked with several groups within their own classrooms. The only additional actions taken were to administer the Bond, Clymer, Hoyt *Silent Reading Diagnostic Tests* to the three lowest groups and to prepare special materials to help pupils with specific word recognition disabilities. This was carried out in cooperation with the Reading Clinic of the University of Georgia's College of Education. Locational and orientation confusion errors were prevalent among the children tested, and special materials were prepared for combating these disabilities.

At the end of six months of instruction, another form of the *California Reading Test* was administered to all groups. Table 2 below summarizes the results. The median gain during the six-month period ranged from nine months to one year and two months.

Overall improvement, as shown by the *California Reading Test*, was more than 10 months for the six groups. These children were above average in ability, and based

TABLE 2
MEASURING GROWTH AFTER SIX MONTHS INSTRUCTION, FOURTH GRADE,
USING TWO FORMS OF CALIFORNIA READING TEST

Group*	Grade Placement		Grade Placement		Median Growth
	Nov.	Median	May	Median	
1		5.7		6.8	0.9
2		5.1		6.1	1.0
3		4.4		5.5	1.1
4		3.9		4.9	1.0
5		3.4		4.6	1.2
6		3.1		4.3	1.2

Highest group is "1," and lowest group is "6."

upon the median IQ, expected growth during the six-month period was estimated to be about seven months. Actual growth exceeded this by more than three months.

Individual growth ranged from 0.1 to 2.7. Five pupils showed a growth of only one month, and a total of 21 pupils grew 6 months or less during the period of instruction. On the other hand, 17 pupils showed growth of a year and one-half or more.

Standardized reading tests measure only a small number of the objectives teachers have in reading instruction. Teacher-made tests and much day-to-day teacher observation also were used to evaluate the results of this six-month study. The teachers concluded that this approach was more productive than the regular within-classroom grouping they had used previously. In addition to the growth shown by the pre- and post-testing, the teachers noted a definite increase in free choice reading. Children also appeared to like the grouping plan.

Definite advantage of the cross-class grouping plan that the teachers observed were the following:

- (1) Each child had a better opportunity of being in a group of children working on his level and experiencing the

same difficulties as a result of having six groups instead of three or four.

- (2) Each teacher had more time to prepare for daily lessons since she had two groups rather than three or four.

- (3) The teacher did more for each individual child since she could spend almost twice as much time working directly with a group by having only two groups.

The teachers realized that the above-expectancy gain could not be attributed totally to the grouping plan used. They recognized that their own efforts and enthusiasm exceeded that of previous years because of their interest in the project. Though the amount of time they spent in working with reading instruction was approximately the same as in the past, fewer activities interfered with reading instruction than in the past. For example, since the children were not all in their home rooms during the reading instruction, such activities as making announcements and checking on lunchroom receipts never encroached upon reading instruction time. It was, for the most part, an uninterrupted period of instruction.

The teachers involved were pleased with the year's work, and they concluded that the cross-class grouping was more efficient in terms of teacher and pupil time and effort than the familiar within-class grouping.

Getting A Child Ready To Read

The child who cries the first day of school or who clings to his mother the first week is announcing to all concerned that he may be among those in the group who will be the last to learn to read. He is immature emotionally. Or factors at home have made him feel insecure. Other children will hint their future position at the end of the reading line by showing short attention. A child who rubs his eyes or squints hints at a possible vision defect that will delay his reading of small print. A hearing defect may keep a child from hearing words as they should be read. A few retarded children will remain child-like in mind and not be ready until they are nine or ten to learn to read the first grade primer. That is their growth schedule. Just as reading enriches the child who reads, the child requires a certain enrichment to be able to read. Even average children need to know about the farm in order to read about it.

The whole child is involved in preparing him for readiness in reading—his eyes, ears, what he had for breakfast, what he saw on a trip last week, and what his mother and father quarrelled about over their coffee this morning. Reading, like falling in love, is a psychic, physical, and mental involvement of the total person. A child must have a "need" readiness which will inspire him to devote his whole efforts to the fullest implications of the task at hand. The child who is not ready to read by the end of the year shows this by doing only a portion of each task in the day. The child most ready to read will do two given

assignments in the same time that it takes the non-ready child to do a fraction—such as one-thirteenth of a task. This behavior is consistent through the year. One child carries a sieve through the day; the other, a closely-woven basket for accumulating skills, experience, and practice. By the end of the year, one child has achieved reading readiness and the other child by his immaturity has practically skipped the grade.

Since language readiness is one of the pre-requisites for reading, try to include all the children by having at least a third of the class day given to speaking skills, fostered by dramatic productions where all participate. With adequate preparation to prevent initial frustration, all the children will acquire a keen "desire" for reading. The major obstacle is the slow maturation of the eye muscles (even when no defect may be present) which may either be the result of emotional immaturity or the cause of it. With playful immature tots, the eyes do not grip the reading line, but tend to wander over the page to the pictures. Such a child needs "time" and another starting-over period. The most regrettable feature of the reading readiness period is that a parent doesn't have the over-all picture of the group that the teacher has—and can not see that her child needs more time in order to achieve reading readiness.

A child has a readiness to read if he has a certain fluency in discussing events

Miss Gilpatrick is Instructor at Seton Hall University, School of Education, Jersey City, New York.

and the meanings of pictures; an ability to distinguish likenesses and differences; color discrimination; an ability to state his ideas in clear, good language; and a familiarity with books that have been read to him at home. He should know how to play and work with other children. He must have the mental scope to be able to see the relationship between ideas and to be able to anticipate the outcome of a story. His total maturation is involved.

A child may use three different attacks in unlocking a new word. He should be taught to look for the meaning (which includes a reasonable expectancy about what might happen next); to look at the size and contour of the word (and locate small words within the larger one as well as the syllables); and finally, to identify a word through sounding the letters, using phonics.

I believe that phonics should be taught at the same time as the first pre-primer and that it should be taught concurrently with the reading program right up through the sixth grade. This will enable phonics to fall into place naturally without its acquiring a gauche emphasis through its total omission or its sudden specialized introduction in some particular year. If the teacher herself is not acquainted with the science of phonics, she will not be able to introduce it effortlessly at those moments in the class day when it applies. All the teachers in the primary division should take in-service courses in phonics to equip them for introducing it in the right proportions during the day. The interest of the whole school in the program would not later make it necessary for one teacher to have to make up for another's omission.

The fact that English spelling is only

partially phonetic is no reason for omitting phonics altogether. The first grade should be made acquainted with the fact that all the letters (like all the animals they know) make a sound peculiar to itself as well as have a name. The second grade could learn that three-letter words have short vowels in the middle which become long the minute silent "e" is added. Phonics could be a pleasant mental gymnastic for each grade when given in the amounts commensurate with the students' understanding in that grade. With brief daily drills each year, phonics need never jeopardize the total picture by being over-emphasized.

Two phonetic primers are: *I Can Read* by Anna Cordts, (Beckley-Cardy Publishers, Chicago,) and *Reading with Phonics* by Julie Hay and Charles Wingo, (Lippincott Publishers, Chicago,) All of the educational publishers put out phonics workbooks, each more interesting than the other and all excellent, which are well worth using. Each grade has its own level workbook. I have used many of these with remedial reading students and found the children's interest to be deeply engaged by the exercises in them.

In a class of beginning readers, use a group system which resembles a small school of fish before the immediate obstacle of a waterfall—that is, one by one, a child leaves the group he is in to swim over the waterfall—and find himself in a new depth, facing a slightly harder challenge in a swifter moving current. In the very beginning, have the children stand around you while you show them that they move their eyes from left to right as they read, always reading the left page before turning to the right. At this close range,

you can hear the shy, tentative voices and can detect when a voice gets surer and firmer. As his voice emerges from the rest, give him a shining smile in confirmation of his accuracy, a pat on the cheek in valedictory and very shortly, sharing his joy in his success, put him in another group. The quality of joy is very important in helping children make that difficult hurdle of first learning to pin words down on the page and name them . . . Quivering, elusive butterflies, words seem to be squirming all over the page until the child's eyes become adjusted to moving in a straight steady line. If the child fixates on words or tends to go back over the line, he will be a slow, halting reader. Early training is important.

When one child succeeds, the others gird themselves to pay greater attention. Attention is a prime factor in securing results. With beginning readers, the great moment comes when a child catches the knack of reading words in succession. A group system should be flexible. It is a greenhouse where plants bud and blossom one at a time. Keep the buds around you. Stay with slow-developing children until the last one blooms. Celebrate that moment with a sharing of affection and joy so that they can associate reading with a pleasant sense of triumph rather than with disheartening discouragement. Reading is an uphill road. It is good to pause and enjoy the scenery around one and the view below. When the child at last takes his pre-primer home and shows his family that he can read, he gets a second feeling of triumph.

With gifted children, branch out into supplementary reading. For the first, second, and third grades, Macmillan has individual paper-covered readers to supple-

ment the basal readers, each only fifty-pages long. The first and second grade booklets could be used with those in the upper grades who need easier material to read. The third grade booklets could be used for gifted children in the first and second. They cost very little. I am very much in favor of buying fewer copies of one reader so that one may buy small sets of many other readers. Like piano playing, the more practice the better.

With children of six to eight years, twenty minutes at a time is sufficient for the reading period. When interest lags, ask the children to read a few pages silently. Try to have them cover twenty pages of a pre-primer at a time, rather than risk their memorizing three or four. Have the reading during the first hour before their hands get sticky from recess lunch and while their minds and eyes are rested.

Along with their developing skill with reading, I work on helping them perfect manuscript writing. It resembles the print in which their first reading is found and prepares them for the cursive writing they will later do. By choosing reading and spelling words for the writing period, one can help the child gain success in three areas and stimulate him to want to continue trying. Manuscript writing is very beautiful in itself when done accurately and is a most satisfying skill to the children, for it puts perfection within their immediate grasp. When he is taught the easiest forms first with his growing motor skills in mind, a small child can rapidly gain in neatness within this circumscribed area. He does not have to start out accepting mediocrity as his goal, for the simple print is easy for small hands to master. His critical sense and his achievement do not

quarrel. He can say, "This is good!" according to anyone's most exacting standards. This develops a wholesome character.

After all, one does not learn how to

read in order to become a reader. One learns how to read in order to become a better and happier person.

REA CLARK

When Children Praise A Book

"What's that book about?"

"It's good. It's about a southern girl and family."

"Can I have it after you?"

"What cha reading?"

"*Caddie Woodlawn*."

"Is it any good?"

"Yes, it's real good. It's about a girl."

"Hey, I found a good 'snake book!'"

"Aw, I don't like snakes."

Eleven of the sixteen girls in my fifth grade class have read *Caddie Woodlawn*¹ this year. Only three have read another similar historical story. Why? This question prompted me to try to discover why children read the books they do. The quotations above are three results of the eavesdropping which accompanied the investigation.

The first result of the investigation was the discovery that ten-year-olds do talk about books. They volunteer opinions. They solicit advice. Often, they tend to take that advice. When asked why they chose to read the books they are now reading, a great many children replied, "Mary read it and she told me it was good, so now I'm reading it."

However, there's more to the story than the "thumbnail reviews" quoted. More important than the "What" is said

between children, is the "Who" said it. When a book is praised by one child, others wait in line to read it. If a different child recommends, no one seems to care. And so, in part at least, the group status of the child telling about the book influences the book's success with others. This explains why *Caddie Woodlawn* took my class like an epidemic of measles. The first child who read it was one of the leaders. The list of "Also reads" is like a sociogram. The reading of the book was inspired by a desire to be part of a group experience, to be a member of the gang.

Some children profess to know one or two others who "Like the same things I do." If Janie reads a story and likes it, then Betsy is pretty sure she will like it too. Sometimes she doesn't bother to try the story, but she knows that if she did, she'd like it and someday she will. Many times they have trouble deciding who will tell about the books they read, and generally take turns. Carole and Loraine, on the other hand, try out books independently, but when one approves of a story the other reads it and "Likes it too." Security and companionship are thus gained

Miss Clark is a fifth grade teacher in Greenburgh District No. 8 Schools, Westchester County, New York.

¹Carol Ryrie Brink, *Caddie Woodlawn*. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1957.

through books, and in return are the reasons some children choose the books they do.

These reactions work in reverse as well. If a girl tells about a book she has enjoyed, the boys conclude that it must be a "girls' book." If a child they don't like approves a story, it may put the kiss-of-death on the volume for quite some time. Many of these pre-set opinions about books are so strong that the Atom Bomb could not budge them.

The children, then, are getting their information in large part from each other. They are evaluating that advice both in terms of its content and the source. Critical thinking is being used by ten-year-olds in much the same way adults use it when choosing their reading from the *New York Times Book Review*.

What does this mean to teachers? Can the power of children's advice to each other be used to stimulate more reading? At the present time, this potent force is taking place in many schools informally, if not in secret. How much of the potential is being wasted because of inadequate opportunities for communication is hard to estimate. Why not make a place for this sharing of reading information and reactions in the curriculum? There are several ways that might be done.

First, time might be set aside at the beginning of the day, for instance, for free conversation. In a stimulating atmosphere, such as a classroom containing its own library, with new books appearing from time to time, book jacket displays, and projects connected with the leisure reading program, the subject of books would be a natural one. Under these circumstances, the opinions and advice would

be encouraged, and the interest in reading might be raised without a word being said by the teacher.

Another idea might be for the teacher to casually ask, "Who is reading a good book now?" Without any formal structure, the child would then give the class his "Review." Since participation in the program is both voluntary and impromptu, the chief disadvantages of "Book Reports" might be avoided.

A very important adjunct to this program, I feel, is the discontinuance of the traditional book report, delivered before the class in the best oratorical style (feet together, head up), repeating in inferior prose the plot of a story. They are "reading discipline," not in any way a sharing of reading reactions. And they are seldom honest. Since his opinion is never asked, Johnny never says that the book was boring. There is the possibility that he didn't even read the book. Because children recognize the lack of honesty, they are not interested, nor do they gain any useful information for their own reading.

Still another way of utilizing the children's own feelings about books, within the curriculum, is to plan time for sharing reading. I have been trying this out and it shows definite promise. It's risky from a literary point of view, for more often than not the children do not agree with the Newbery Award committee. Their opinions are heavily influenced by social and psychological factors. But when the right child says a book is good, other children tend to believe him and become interested in reading it. The opinions expressed, if properly treated, can be both honest and useful to others.

Honesty is the most delicate element

in this program. The children's opinions must be accepted and respected. Unfavorable as well as favorable opinions must be allowed. There is no place for the teacher who must up lift taste constantly (this must be saved for another time, and controlled). If Billy is asked whether he *really* thinks his book is good literature, he'll agree that it isn't and take no more chances on being embarrassed on a second contribution to the project. Honest and free opinion sharing must be just that, for better or for worse, but without shame.

In the beginning, at least, it is a good idea to set an objective or purpose for the program. It eliminates some self-consciousness and diverts attention from the teacher's purpose, that of introducing children to books she hopes they'll read. The class might discuss in order to list books they'd like to add to the classroom library. Or they might enjoy making up a "Want List" to be distributed to grandparents and parents before Christmas or birthdays. I used a course in children's literature I was taking, as a purpose the first time, asking the children to suggest books I should read. They did pretty well, too, listing six books the first session and fourteen more the next time.

The purpose of the program, then, is to help children find books they will enjoy reading, and to read more because they enjoy it. By using their own feelings about specific books, with honesty and accept-

ance, the sharing gains meaning. The children begin to trust the advice they hear.

Along with that, children are getting practice in critical evaluation based on content and source. They are doing some critical thinking about the reading they do. At one point, we had a girl recommending *The Black Stallion*,² a book that a boy had already read and liked. This made it more difficult for the class to pigeon-hole the story as "Boy's" or "Girl's." They have to tell *why* they liked or disliked books, when called upon to defend an opinion. They are sometimes asked to decide whether a story is good for all boys or just people interested in science fiction, or fantasy, or sports.

This is not to say that this program, in the short space of six weeks, has caused a run on the library. But it has begun to increase interest in books. Some children are reading different kinds of stories than they had been reading, and a few are reading appreciably more. It will take longer to assess the full value of the program, perhaps more time than remains this year. Then it will be next year that the evaluation will be attempted. However, I feel that the worst possible result would be neutral, while at best it could be a real help to extend children's reading taste, enthusiasm, and ability, as well as to acquaint more of them with the fun available between the covers of good books.

²Walter Farley. *The Black Stallion*. New York, Random House, 1941.

The Nancy Bloch Memorial Award for 1958 was given to Dorothy Sterling for *Captain of the Planter* (Doubleday). *South Town* by Lorenz Graham (Follett) received Honorable Mention. The Bloch Award is given to outstanding books on intergroup relations by the Nancy Bloch Intercultural Library of the Downtown Community School, New York City.

Using Literature to Extend Children's Experiences

Children's literature offers a wealth of possibilities to the classroom teacher. One of these is the opportunity of extending children's experiences by means of a guided or planned theme. This technique can be used rather easily and successfully and at the same time have the potential for providing almost unlimited reading opportunities. There are many themes or topics that may be examined by this method. Such subjects as family living, group dynamics, political science, or social problems lend themselves to this type of reading program. Depending upon the nature and makeup of the individual class, almost any area can be investigated with equal assurance of success.

There are many sources of help and aid when undertaking this type program, for example, the school consultants, or printed material, such as the pamphlet entitled, *Reading Ladders for Human Relations*. It was both of these that were employed in developing this program of extending children's experience through literature under the rather general theme of "Family Living—the Responsibilities of the Members to Each Other and the Individual Member of Himself." Of the many avenues of approach offered in initiating a unit such as this, a "picture-discussion" type was chosen. This of course is not the only way; there are many others, such as theme writing, general discussions, problems that arise in the classroom, topics that come up during counseling or guidance periods, or general interest

items that come from a newspaper or recent magazine article. However, the major items to consider in the selection of the introduction are (1) the needs or desires of the individual class, and (2) what the teacher considers a rather "sure-fire" way of stimulating the entire group along the same "thought channels." While it is virtually impossible for every member of the class to become completely interested and participate one hundred per cent, it is most imperative that the teacher, when selecting the theme and determining the approach, should be sensitive to the feelings of the greater majority and react and direct accordingly.

As was previously mentioned, the "picture-discussion" method was employed in initiating this particular unit. An untitled picture of a boy sitting on a table talking to a man was presented to the class one day during language period, and they were asked to look at it and reflect on the nature of the picture. When they felt that they were ready to discuss the picture or had formed some opinion about it, they were asked to raise their hands. After a short period of time, a discussion, a rather lively discussion, followed in which many ideas were offered concerning its contents; the participants in the picture, what they were doing, and what they were thinking. After a short period of discussion, the class was to think again about the picture in light of the previous discussion and also to

Mr. Bone is principal of Bowling Green School in Sacramento, California.

consider what might have followed the particular action of this picture and also what might have been the background or foundation of this picture. This discussion lasted for a short period of time until the termination of the period at which time, they, of course, wanted to know what the picture was about. An answer was refused. They were told that the picture would be available to them at all times, that they would be free to discuss it among themselves, and that we would continue our discussion tomorrow. The next day a second picture, similarly untitled, was presented to them. This picture had four figures in it, two children, a man and a woman. Discussions, quite similar to those of the preceding day, followed and the same interest was present. Again the discussion was terminated at the end of the language period with the understanding that we would continue the next day. On the following day instead of presenting another picture or discussing the two pictures further, they were told that a book was going to be read to them and that this book also would be available for them to read. The book was entitled, *Caddie Woodlawn*, and the chapter which had been selected was, "Father Speaks." In this particular chapter, Caddie and her brothers had been rather mischievous and had harassed their visiting city cousin in devious little ways. The mother was quite exasperated with their behavior, and, as a result, Caddie was severely chastised in front of her brothers and sisters in spite of the fact that they confessed partial guilt for the "crimes." Caddie was whipped and sent to her room. Of course, being extremely embarrassed and feeling that she had been unfairly and unjustly treated, she

planned to run away that evening after the rest of the family had retired. She gathered up what she considered were her precious belongings, laid them at the foot of her bed, and pretended to fall asleep. However, during the evening her father came to her. Without waking her, he spoke to her in a soft, sympathetic, and understanding voice. Caddie immediately broke into tears and decided that she had a pretty good place to live after all.

Following the reading of this chapter, a discussion was initiated with questions such as these: Was Caddie's punishment fair? Was father right in his actions? How did the children stick together? What other action could the family members have taken? The discussion was, of course, lively and heated and there were varied opinions which were to be expected. Before the interest in the discussion lagged or started to decline, the children were asked what they thought the pictures and story had in common. After some indecision and disagreement, the class came to the general opinion that the pictures and story had something to do with family life. And, again, after some direction and guidance, they came to the conclusion that it had to do with how families live, get along, and react to one another. This was finally formulated into the idea "What Are the Responsibilities of Each Family Member."

Then came the real test of interest—the real expression of the successfulness of the motivation period. How were they (many of whom could be considered reluctant readers) going to move through this transition period from interesting class discussion into the books and titles that were going to be made available to

them in order to follow this guided reading program through? There were many different titles set up on the front reading table, some of them opened and/or marked to pages of interest. The children were told that these books were similar to the one titled *Caddie Woodlawn*, that they were all generally about families—different types of families—and that they followed our general theme. Some elucidations, little discussions, or summaries of the book contents were made in order to stimulate interest in the various titles. After this brief discussion, they were told that they could select any books they wanted and take them to their desk. However, this was not an assignment and they had the option of reading the other books that they had in their desks during the remainder of the period. This was, of course, the real test. Many of the children, particularly the better readers, came to the table, looked through the books, and selected a title. Some, of course, returned them after glancing through a few pages, but many kept them. Some came to the table not at all and appeared to be slightly uninterested.

This reading period, by plan, was very short and was terminated by recess. When they returned, they had a short arithmetic lesson and upon its completion they were given the opportunity, if they so desired, to read the books they had selected the previous period. It was gratifying when many more titles were selected and many more children were reading. What was more important, the children were keeping them and were interested. The hard part was over and the more interesting part was yet to come.

After several reading periods, book

characters were discussed in terms of real people. One of the things that was discussed was punishment in the home. It was found that in many of the books the behavior that resulted in punishment had been a common experience to many members of the class. However, it was found that peoples, living in different areas or countries, have different things that they consider of more or less serious nature. The discussion centered around types of punishment that they received at home and for what offenses. The decision was made to play out one of these situations to see how different members of the class would react in similar problems. The one, of course, that was decided upon was quarrels between brothers and sisters and the intervention of mother and father. Regular role playing techniques were employed and discussion and switching of characters and situations were used.

Some discussion was directed toward types of restrictions that are placed on them by their parents. These were discussed by the entire group a few days later and during the discussion such questions as: "Why are these restrictions placed on us?" and "How can we live with them?" were interjected. Also, the information and experiences from the books were encouraged to be brought into the discussion.

By this time many children in the class had read *Caddie Woodlawn* which, of course, was by far the most popular book, and also there were many more titles of it available than any of the others. We probed deeper into the personalities of the family involved. Such questions as: Are these real people? How do you know they are? How do other families in other books behave and get along together as com-

pared to those in Caddie Woodlawn's family? What were some of the better ways of living that we encountered in these books? How can these ways be modified or changed or employed in our own life to make it better or more interesting? These discussions proved quite valuable as they aroused much interest in different titles and reading further. It stimulated those who were more reluctant to read than others to at least look into the books. Other devices were used. There are many excellent guidance films available: *You and Your Friends* and *You and Your Family* are two excellent examples. These were employed at different times and discussed in relationship to the books and in relationship to the class's own living experiences. The most interesting film, however, proved to be one titled, *Po River Valley*.

At the time in social studies, the class was studying Italy. The Po River Valley being one of the more important farming regions of the country, this film was presented by one of the social studies groups. These United World Films are narrated by a member of a family or a citizen of a town and discussed with this theme in mind. It was interesting in following the film that the points of which the children were most cognizant were such things as what the different members of the family were doing. They were interested in the fact that the boys and girls were expected to come home immediately after school and help either in the house or in the field, that one of the boys was expected to follow his father's trade, that the girl was expected to become a housewife, and that they all had responsibilities. This was

quite different from their own lives. This, it seemed, was rather strong evidence that the reading theme was exerting some influence on their thinking, and, while no profound or greatly observable behavior changes had taken place, many new learnings and experiences had been encountered and assimilated.

Most of the discussions after the first few weeks followed mostly along the bent and inclination of individual students or groups of students. Some of the most interesting debates developed around group pressures, that is, group pressures within the family and group pressures from without and the way they affect the family relationships. Other things were discussed, such as family disagreements and family responsibilities. These, for the most part, seemed important at some time during a discussion of film and, of course, were followed up. Whenever the opportunity arose, the children offered examples in the books and how these situations originated or were solved in the books.

Other techniques also were followed in developing this unit of reading. Open end questions on ditto forms formed the basis of further discussions and insights into different problems, behavior traits, and "learnings." Further role playing was undertaken. One particularly interesting play developed in the field of family disagreements. There was a difference of opinion as to what a family should do together and what the individual members of the family should be able to do for themselves or be able to decide themselves. Also, there were written anonymous responses to pictures, to pictures similar to those that were used at the beginning of the unit. Also, at the end, the

children were asked to submit anonymous evaluations of the particular program, particularly with the idea, "Has this reading program helped me in being a happier and better member of my family?"

Of course, what was hoped of this program, that would show great changes in behavior for the better, that many or all the children would become profoundly and deeply interested in reading, and that there would be unanimous agreement that this type of program was a success, was not completely realized. However, changes in behavior are slow in developing, they are difficult to observe, and their changes are gradual and continuous. This is but one little developmental step in this curve in

the change of behavior. Also, development of a sensitive reading interest can grow slowly, particularly with the reluctant reader. It would be misleading to say everyone read avidly or read at all. However, the vast majority did read, were interested, and did read many different titles. The children appeared to pick up many new techniques of behavior. Also, all the children were not sold on this particular program, but by far the majority agreed that it was worthwhile and there were other subjects, other topics that they would like to read about and discuss. This type of program offers much to the classroom teacher and to the individual members of the class.

If

If the world was made of a popcorn ball,
And the oceans of apple cider,
I'd eat and drink but I'm afraid
My stomach would grow much wider.

If the trees were made of peppermint sticks
And the flowers of chocolate bars,
I'd have a nighttime fiesta,
All lighted by the stars.

But the world's *not* made of a popcorn ball
Nor the oceans of apple cider.
So there's really not a reason
Why my stomach should grow much wider!

By

Linda Janice Armstrong
Fifth Grade, Age 11
Grinnell Public Schools
Grinnell, Iowa

Submitted by
Beryl Wellborn
Grinnell College
Grinnell, Iowa

Comic Books vs. Story Books

In an attempt to discover the reading interests of primary children, a pupil questionnaire was devised and used at the early fourth grade level. It was felt that beginning fourth grade students were old enough to answer questions of the type desired and yet young enough to still be in the interest range of primary pupils.

The entire questionnaire consisted of 18 items, most of which required only checking the desired responses.

It was planned to study the responses according to sex, reading achievement, and I. Q. scores of the participants.

On September 14, 1955, the questionnaires were sent to every fourth grade room in the Community Unit Schools of Mattoon, Illinois.

Every room returned the completed questionnaires within two weeks—a total of 14 rooms and 356 boys and girls.

Here are the questions which the children answered on the subject of comic books.

1. Do you read comic books?
2. Which of these do you enjoy most?
 - a. comic books
 - b. story books

Mrs. Slover teaches third grade in the Humboldt School, Mattoon, Illinois.

3. Give a reason for your choice in the question above.

To the first question nearly every child answered "yes." In percentages the responses were 90% "yes," 10% "no."

This supports Witty and Sizemore's findings in a study of 10,380 high school students who said that they were most interested in comic books when they were in third and fourth grade.¹

The next question, which asked for a choice between comic books and story books, brought some very interesting responses.

To analyze the answers to this question, three groups were considered:

¹Paul Witty and R. A. Sizemore, "Reading the Comics; A Summary of Studies and an Evaluation," *Elementary English* XXXI (December), 503.

²Reading achievement groups were arbitrarily determined in this way: High reading achievement consists of all reading scores of a grade level of 5.0 and above. Average reading achievement consists of scores of a grade level from 3.1 up to and including scores of 4.9. Low reading achievement is considered as those scores of 3.0 and below.

³High I. Q. scores were established as those of 110 and higher. Average I. Q. scores were those from 90 to 109 inclusive. Low I. Q. scores were those from 89 and downward.

TABLE I
Percentages of preference to comic books as opposed to story books

	Comic Books	Storybooks
Group I		
Boys	68	32
Girls	32	68
Total Group	52	48
Group II		
High Reading Ach.	46	54
Average Reading Ach.	50	50
Low Reading Ach.	63	37
Group III		
High I. Q.	47	53
Average I. Q.	53	47
Low I. Q.	60	40

I. Boys and girls

II. High, average, and low reading achievement.²III. High, average, and low intelligence test scores.¹

The choices of each group are given in Table I.

The previous table shows that while children really do enjoy comic books, we do not actually need to be too much disturbed about this reading habit. A very high percentage of these children enjoy good books. After all, if half of the children at 9 are reading and enjoying good stories, then it is very likely that their tastes will continue to improve as they grow older.

Strang¹ has stated that according to her findings most good readers preferred story

books rather than comic books.

She also stated: "The fact that a person can get the story in pictures with only a small amount of reading makes the comics attractive to many children who are poor readers."²

So, while the present study did show a small majority in favor of comic books it is consoling to find out that the best readers and the more intelligent children are choosing better reading material and leaving the so-called comic book stage.

Many reasons were given in answer to the third and last question on comic books vs. story books.

Table II gives some of the reasons given most frequently for preferring comic books.

Three other reasons given only once were

TABLE II

Reason	Number of times mentioned
1. They are funny.	70
2. They are more interesting.	23
3. I like them better.	18
4. They have more pictures.	10
5. Because they are easier.	8
6. Because they have cowboys.	7
7. They are exciting.	6
8. They have more variety.	6
9. They have better stories.	4
10. Because I like mystery.	3

very good.

1. I used to look at the pictures when I was little. So now that I can read I like them.
2. Because I learned to read from them.
3. I can trade comics better than story books.

These last reasons seemed to have a real value. Children's tastes begin to form at an early age. They are likely to be interested in the things they enjoyed when quite young.

No teacher could entirely discount reason

2 above. It is highly desirable that *all* children learn to read from some source, even if the quality of that source is not of the finest.

These reasons were given most frequently for preferring story books.

Some rather interesting reasons given only once were:

1. Because I am a Christian and don't read bad stories.
2. They are good for children.
3. Comic books hurt my eyes.
4. Story books are not so silly.

There appears to be ample evidence that children will read what is available and what

¹Ruth Strang, "Why Children Read the Comics," *Elementary School Journal*, XLIII (January, 1943), 342.

²*Ibid.*, 542.

they enjoy. It is the responsibility of the school, the home, and the public libraries to make available books which will meet the needs and interests of all boys and girls.

Taste in books cannot be entirely under the control of the teacher. The following true story illustrates this fact very well.

Just last September, a few weeks after school had started, Darrell brought a big

stack of comic books to school to show the boys and girls. He was very proud of them. Although I did not actually forbid the children to read them, I encouraged them to notice the bookmobile books in our room and always commented favorably when I saw a child reading a library book in his free time.

One Friday Darrell became very much concerned about his comic books. (I knew what

TABLE III

Reason	Number of times mentioned
1. They are more interesting.	50
2. They are more fun.	17
3. I like them better.	12
4. They tell more about real people and real things.	10
5. They have more different kinds of stories.	9
6. They have nicer stories.	8
7. Stories are longer and have more to them.	7
8. They are more exciting.	6
9. You learn more.	3
10. They have fairy stories.	3
11. They are easier to read and understand.	2

had happened to several of them. On various evenings when I had been straightening up the room, the wastepaper basket had been entirely too handy.) He had given many of them away and could find only 3 or 4 to take home. He came up to me with tears in his eyes and said, "Mom told me I had to bring home every comic book tonight." We did our best but only a few could be found.

The next morning while shopping uptown I met Darrell's mother and talked to her for a while. She was obviously upset and I soon found out why. She asked me about Darrell's comic books. I told her that we would continue to look for them. Then I discovered the reason why she was so perturbed. She said to me, "Do you realize Mrs. S—that Darrell took those comic books to school before I read them?"

Kinds of Stories Liked By Primary Children

One question was as follows: What kinds

of stories do you like best from this list?

Cowboy stories
Fairy stories
Animal stories
Indian stories
Funny stories
Stories about boys and girls
Stories about great men

In answering this question, the children checked as many choices as they wished.

Their responses were very interesting and rather different from those usually given in answer to similar questions. Usually primary children choose animal stories and stories about boys and girls. These children, particularly the boys, chose to be different.

The following table shows their choices in order of preference.

Fairy stories have always been in high favor among girls of this age group, so the girls of the present study conformed rather closely to earlier studies. A rather striking fact is that the boys ranked fairy stories higher

TABLE IV

Boys' Choices	Girls' Choices
1. Cowboy stories	1. Fairy stories
2. Indian stories	2. Funny stories
3. Stories about great men	3. Animal stories
4. Animal stories	4. Stories about great men
5. Funny stories	5. Stories about boys and girls
6. Fairy stories	6. Cowboy stories
7. Stories about boys and girls	7. Indian stories

than stories about boys and girls.

Table IV shows the total choices of boys, and girls.

It was rather surprising to notice that stories about boys and girls and animals. Per-

stories about boys and girls were last on the list of preferences. Most of our reading textbooks give children a very steady diet of stories about boys and girls and animals. Per-

TABLE V

Kind of story	Number of times mentioned
1. Funny stories	211
2. Cowboy stories	211
3. Indian stories	211
4. Stories about great men	198
5. Fairy stories	191
6. Animal stories	188
7. Stories about boys and girls	108

haps they should give some thought to biography, even in the early primary grades.

The following twelve stories were named most often by children participating in this study. In order of preference they are:

1. Little Red Riding Hood
2. Roy Rogers
3. Davy Crockett
4. Lone Ranger

5. Donald Duck
6. Rin-Tin-Tin
7. Black Beauty
8. Snow White
9. Cinderella
10. Hansel and Gretel
11. Abraham Lincoln
12. Bobbsey Twins

These books were named in answer to the last question of the questionnaire.

THE MOON AND THE ROCKET

The Russians sent a rocket to the moon.

The moon was not happy

When he saw that strange thing

Sailing about in the sky.

"O, dear me," said the moon,

"What is that funny looking thing

Coming this way?

Suppose it strikes me.

What shall I do?

I am old.

People have always had me to look at.

Men have written songs about me.

People love to see me shine.

Where will I land, when I fall?

My, My, please don't strike me

I have no hands.

I cannot help myself.

O dear me,

How I wish I could be

Happy with the stars

And the sun again."

By Josephine McDaniel

3rd Grade

Age nine

Teacher—Mrs. E. J. Skinner

Submitted by

Mrs. Kathryn B. Bibbins, Prin.

Lindenwood School,

Norfolk 4, Va.

Provisions for Critical Reading in Basic Readers

The problem of developing skill in critical reading is essentially one of helping the child to think as he reads. This ability is generally accepted as the basis of all intelligent reading. It begins with simple reasoning and moves gradually to meaning levels requiring complicated analysis.

When John Dewey wrote *How We Think*, he made special reference to the levels of critical thinking which reflect critical reading ability. He stated: "The only way in which a person can reach ability to make accurate definitions, penetrating classifications, and comprehensive generalizations is by thinking alertly and carefully on his own present level. Some kind of intellectual organization must be required, or else habits of vagueness, disorder, and incoherent 'thinking' will be formed. But the organization need not be that which would satisfy the mature expert."¹

The knowledge that reading is a highly complex process involving efficient habits of thinking has been accepted by educators for more than forty years. As early as 1917 Thorndike (23) pointed out that reading frequently "involves the same sort of organization and analytic action of ideas as occur in thinking of supposedly higher sorts." It follows that, in our democratic way of life, the primary function of an effective educational organization should be the systematic development of the mental faculties of perception, reasoning, and thinking.

Character of Reading Behavior

Earliest investigations in education and psychology explained the complete reading act as the visual recognition of words by means of a

simple, mental process. Extensive research during the past five decades has indicated the limitations of this point of view. Scientific findings have revealed that reading is not merely a simple visual-motor skill but a highly complex intellectual activity of which word recognition is only a part.

The history of reading instruction in America reveals a series of phases which have resulted in the present-day interpretation of reading as a highly complicated activity. In a recent monograph Gray (14) explained this variation of emphasis in terms of "recognized dimensions of reading." In the report just cited, Gray gave a complete discussion of the expansion of the nature of reading from a relatively limited act to an increasingly involved process. This enlargement of the concept of reading was explained in terms of four phases: perception, understanding, reaction, and integration.

The first interpretation, prominent around the early 1900's, limited the meaning of "reading" to word perception (19). This narrow concept of the reading act is still prevalent.

In formulating the next revision of thinking concerning the reading process, educators added the "development of the thought processes" to the word-perception idea (14). Several years before Thorndike (23) found evidence that reading efficiency was affected by the number and quality of associations aroused.

A more adequate statement of the nature of the reading act was formulated in 1937. Efficiency in reading was described in terms of perception, meaning, and the application of the ideas obtained through reading to other

¹John Dewey, *How We Think*, D. C. Heath and Company, 1933. pp. 84, 85.

Dr. Williams is Professor of English at the District of Columbia Teachers College.

situations (22).

The present status of reading as a highly functional factor in human personal-social relationships is in sharp contrast to one of the earliest interpretations of the reading process as "a comparatively simple intellectual-visual-motor skill." In a recent yearbook Gates (18) expressed the current point of view in his statement of reading as "a complex organization of patterns of higher mental processes." Later, he added: "Furthermore, reading is not to be regarded as limited to mental activities. The dynamic and emotional processes are also involved."

Although the development of wide interests as well as accurate vocabulary skills are basic to effective critical reading, this paper will not present a detailed discussion on these aspects of comprehension. With particular reference to the perceptual process, it would be reasonable to expect satisfactory achievement in perceiving printed and written symbols before the desirable attainment of techniques of thinking, imagining, judging, analyzing, evaluating, and reasoning can be assured. To investigate all of the skills involved in thoughtful reading and to offer suggestions suitable for encouraging their growth would be far beyond the scope of this presentation.

Basic Reading Materials

Early Developments. In the pioneer days of American reading instruction, the intensive reading of a single book comprised the complete reading program in a school term. The *New England Primer*, the first reading text specifically planned for the American colonists, was the outstanding reading material during the period when the school was controlled by the church. Later, around 1776, when state control of education manifested itself, Noah Webster's "Blue-Back" Speller replaced the *New England Primer* as the basic text for developing the fundamental reading skills. Webster's awareness of the inadequacies of a single reading textbook

led to his early attempts at grading materials for reading instruction. (21)

During these formative years in the teaching of reading, Webster, in common with other authors of the period, emphasized the memorization of the alphabet, articulation, and pronunciation as the specific aims of reading instruction. However, there appeared to be a subconscious need for a literal type of comprehension to bring about a more responsible program of reading development. A specific illustration of this factual-type of comprehension appeared in Smith's account of American reading instruction with the religious emphasis. Smith (21) expressed the thinking in regard to the teaching of reading at this time as follows: "One of the most important of these doctrines was that each individual was directly responsible to God for his own salvation. He must not depend upon the interpretation of any mass or prayer, priest or pastor, but must read the Word of God directly and draw his own conclusions. If he were illiterate, he would be compelled to rely upon someone else for this Biblical information and in so doing he would thwart the most fundamental concept of Protestantism. Thus it was that the new religion, for its own sake, was compelled to foster reading instruction."

Between 1840 and 1860 the American graded school evolved to "meet the demand of the increasing interest in basic education." During this period the specific reading objectives included the ability "to acquire knowledge both for its own sake and its uses." Graded reading textbooks, recommended for developing the reading aims, were natural developments of the new graded school system.

The famous McGuffey Readers, which first appeared between the years 1836 and 1844, are reported to be the earliest basic reading series. According to Smith (21) McGuffey was "the first author to produce a clearly defined and carefully graded series consisting of

one reader for each grade in the elementary school." These early graded materials, like those that preceded them, were developed with only a literal type of comprehension in mind. Any desire of a pupil to think critically was subordinated to the author's intent to provide information for the reader.

Although teachers' manuals were widely used in England at this time, there was no provision for this type of educational guidance with the McGuffey Readers. This graded-series plan for teaching reading in the early elementary school operated vaguely because no techniques and methods were provided for insuring systematic instruction.

Years later, when the development of silent reading abilities was first considered to be an important goal in reading instruction, the concept of reading comprehension remained practically unchanged. In 1919, Gray² reported, from research studies, information concerning the comprehension of materials read silently. He concluded: "The results of practically every investigation of this problem (comprehension) indicate clearly the appropriateness of emphasizing the content of what is read, persistently and consistently, throughout the grades."

Basic readers that appeared about this time were primarily concerned with comprehension as understanding the meaning of sentences and paragraphs. Among the comprehension abilities stressed were those concerned with content questions, directions to be followed and the relatedness of elements in sentences and paragraphs.

Teachers' manuals were brought into prominent use during this period because of the emphasis upon the new silent reading procedures. Although the suggestions and direc-

tions were generous and precise, the guidance given did not provide for the development of all types of reading skills.

While there had been great improvement in basic readers in approximately eighty years of development, the progress made could hardly be considered significant since it failed to cover all aspects of reading comprehension. Up to this point there had been little recognition of the values of a reading program that develops thinking and related comprehension abilities. Whenever these or any other abilities in the reading process are underdeveloped or overstressed, growth in reading ability will be seriously affected.

Recent Trends. The basic reading series today are carefully developed materials which provide thoughtful gradation in difficulty and carefully planned activities in the various types of reading the individual child will need. Accompanying manuals provide guidance in the use of the materials for developing specific skills at all levels of achievement. Systematic rather than incidental instruction in reading is provided with basic reading materials.

Based upon the best thinking of experimental investigations, the techniques and procedures provided in these graded readers have contributed greatly to individual as well as group needs in pupil learning. They suggest the modern point of view which is concerned more with bringing ideas to the basic reader rather than with getting ideas from the basic reader.

The teaching of basic reading comprehension skills in the modern elementary school is a highly technical task. Teachers at this level should be well equipped to guide reading activities when the basal reader approach to reading instruction is properly utilized.

Authors of recent manuals for basic readers have made valuable and generous contributions to teacher resources for developing meaningful reading skills. In addition to the teachers'

²William S. Gray, "Principles of Method in Teaching Reading, as Derived from Scientific Investigation," *The Eighteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II*. Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1919. p. 29.

manuals the accompanying workbooks have provided additional, stimulating exercises for the purpose of giving the pupils opportunities to work independently in thinking situations. The most recent advance in developing thinking skills has been made by Betts³ in relation to his newly revised *Basic Readers*. His "Thinking Inventory" is a valuable supplement to each level of the series. It has been widely used to alert teachers to the thinking needs and abilities of their pupils. With such specific help in techniques and procedures for the establishment of learner skills, attitudes, and motives, the teacher should seldom fail to give adequate and proper guidance in emphasizing reading as a thinking process.

Despite the trend in the elementary curriculum toward an increased appreciation of the importance of critical reading and the praiseworthy advances made by educators in the improvement of reading textbooks, a surprisingly large number of boys and girls are failing in reading because of inadequate comprehension skills. This problem facing all teachers has developed from the non-use as well as the misuse of the basic reader and the teacher's manual.

The non-use of the manual has frequently resulted in an over-emphasis upon literal comprehension as a technique for developing interpretation. In such situations little or no provision is made for developing thinking skills beyond the technique of simple recall. Experiences demanding real thinking and thought-provoking situations are frequently disregarded in classrooms where systematic instruction is not provided.

Misuse of the basic readers may also limit the developing of thinking skills in reading situations. Pupils who are required to read at their frustration levels are usually not equipped to handle the meaning skills at the forced in-

structional level. This disregard of the wide range of differences in reading ability within the average classroom is a significant factor when inadequate thinking abilities are noted.

Basic reading materials are being continually revised to meet the fundamental reading needs of the elementary school pupil. A careful examination of recent series will reveal a substantial number of situations in which pupils can develop power in reading as a process in thinking, reasoning, or experiencing. When the possibilities of giving more intensive and extensive guidance in critical reading are recognized, the effectiveness of the basic reader for developing specific thinking skills will be strongly established.

Critical Reading

The importance of thinking in a democratic society makes the understanding of critical reading imperative. Among the obstacles to a clearly defined program of study in critical reading in the elementary grades has been the lack of agreement among educators as to what critical reading really is. This is not surprising since, according to Dewey,⁴ there is still a lack of precise agreement among educators as to what "thinking" really means. An abstraction of this type is usually difficult to identify by a common definition.

An inquiry into the treatment of this subject was made by analyzing a number of basic reader programs to determine the extent to which authors are concerned about the reading-thinking skills of the elementary school pupil. A significant revelation was the fact that what some writers listed as critical reading skills others designated as interpretative skills. In some cases literal comprehension skills were included as critical reading abilities. However, there was significant agreement as to the majority of the skills listed as either critical-reading type or the interpretative type.

³E. A. Betts, *Betts Basic Readers, Second Edition*, American Book Company, 1958.

⁴Dewey, *op. cit.* p. 24.

For the purposes of this report critical reading may be described as intelligent reading directed toward the learning purposes of the individual child. It involves thinking beyond the level of simple recall. It forms an important part of the reading program from the beginning reading level. It should provide numerous situations in which practical problems may be used.

It is generally understood that critical reading skills cannot develop in a vacuum. Certain prerequisites are essential if thought reading is to be a process that does not begin or end in itself. According to Betts (3) prerequisites to thinking should include "an attitude of inquiry, openmindedness, mental maturity, information or facts, language facility and technicals of inquiry." When properly considered, greater effectiveness may be acquired with the use of basic readers.

Specific guidance in critical reading may be identified with certain abilities usually associated with critical thinking. These include (1) comparing and contrasting, (2) drawing conclusions, (3) evaluating conclusions, (4) evaluating relevancy and adequacy of material, (5) making inferences, (6) predicting the outcome of events, (7) arriving at generalizations, distinguishing fact and fancy, et cetera. Only with experiences such as these can real thinking abilities be developed.

Practice with critical thinking abilities must be systematic with frequent opportunities to react to meanings in thought-stimulated situations. Pupils need definitely planned experiences in interpreting reading materials with the higher-level thinking skills.

Opportunities for Critical Reading in Recent Basic Series

Concern for an improved program in the development of critical reading skills cannot be stimulated without some knowledge of how this aspect of the reading program has been handled in our present educational materials.

As a means of determining the critical reading abilities which educators have believed to be significant at the elementary level the writer decided to make a study of the critical reading skills treated in the manuals and textbooks of certain basic series published or revised within the past ten years.

A total of eighty books was selected for the study. Beginning with the preprimer, each level of reading was represented through the sixth grade in each of the ten basic series. Note was made of specific critical reading skills in readers that are found in wide use in the majority of our public and private schools.

Before the results obtained are presented, the writer wishes to make proper acknowledgment of the inherent subjectivity in most of this report. A purely objective treatment of the subject would be impossible mainly because of the lack of agreement among educators as to the nature of critical reading and the specific factors involved. However, every precaution has been taken to reduce subjectivity to a minimum.

In Table I is presented a combined list of thirty-three critical reading skills which were included in the manuals for the ten basic series. No skill was included which could be identified and associated with literal comprehension. This table also points out the number of series including each of the listed skills.

Noticeable differences in the grade range for certain skills were observed. For example, in examining the grade coverage for "perceiving relationships" it was noted that in six instances, the grade range was preprimer to Grade 6; in one instance, Grade 2 to Grade 6; and in two instances, Grade 4 to Grade 6. On the other hand, when "making inferences" was considered it was found that in nine out of ten instances the grade range was from preprimer through the Grade 6 level while in one instance the range was from Grade 2 to Grade 5.

"Making inferences," "making judgments," and "perceiving relationships" were the only

TABLE I

DIFFERENT CRITICAL READING SKILLS FOUND IN 10 SERIES OF BASIC READERS

Critical Reading Skills	Number of series including each skill
Anticipating outcomes	8 out of 10
Appreciating humor, plot	3 out of 10
Classifying ideas	6 out of 10
Comparing and contrasting	7 out of 10
Critical thinking	1 out of 10
Distinguishing fact and fancy	5 out of 10
Distinguishing fact and opinion	8 out of 10
Drawing conclusions	10 out of 10
Establishing cause and effect	4 out of 10
Establishing sequence	9 out of 10
Evaluating author's attitude	1 out of 10
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in light of the author's purpose	4 out of 10
Evaluating and solving problems	2 out of 10
Evaluating summaries	1 out of 10
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	5 out of 10
Forming an opinion	
Forming sensory impressions	6 out of 10
Generalizing	9 out of 10
Identifying elements of style	3 out of 10
Identifying and evaluating character traits	7 out of 10
Interpreting figurative and idiomatic language	8 out of 10
Interpreting ideas implied not stated	6 out of 10
Judging author's statements	5 out of 10
Judging reasonableness and relevancy	4 out of 10
Making inferences	10 out of 10
Making judgments	10 out of 10
Perceiving relationships	10 out of 10
Predicting outcomes	9 out of 10
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection	5 out of 10
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives	3 out of 10
Recognizing story problems and plot structure	4 out of 10
Relating story experiences to personal experiences	2 out of 10
Research	1 out of 10

critical reading skills that appeared in all ten basic series. "Predicting outcomes" and "establishing sequence" appeared in nine out of ten series, while "anticipating outcomes" and "interpreting figurative and idiomatic language" were found in eight out of ten series. "Critical thinking," "evaluating summaries," and "research" appeared in only one of the ten basic series.

The results of Table I are significant especially to those interested in the most effec-

tive ways of developing critical reading skills. Those skills indicating a need for guidance in simple reasoning started at or near the pre-primer level, while those requiring a more involved type of thinking were assigned to the upper elementary grades. This is entirely in keeping with the thinking of Betts (4) and others who have suggested that guidance in the development of critical reading skills should start with the beginning reading program.

Analysis of the eighty basic readers revealed 186 critical reading skills with a range of eleven to twenty-four for the different series. Table II shows the distribution of the skills among the various reading series. Series A, which stresses the language arts approach to reading instruction had the highest incidence of critical reading skills while Series C emphasizing meaningful reading, showed a total of twenty different skills. The series with the smallest number of critical reading skills had less than half the number found in Series A.

TABLE II

FREQUENCY OF CRITICAL READING SKILLS IN BASIC SERIES

Basic Series	Number of Different Critical Reading Skills Included
Series A	24
Series B	21
Series C	20
Series D	20
Series E	20
Series F	19
Series G	18
Series H	17
Series I	16
Series J	11

In each series there is some difference of opinion concerning the naming of the critical reading skills. This is significant, for the results of the tabulations have been affected by the writer's interpretation of a listed skill. However, careful consideration was given to similar appearing skills whenever the language indicated some agreement in the thought of each.

Summary and Conclusions

In order to promote growth in the ability to read critically, effort must be expended to develop the pre-requisites for critical reading. These should include: (1) interest in reading; (2) purpose in reading; (3) adequacy of experience; (4) independence in word perception; (5) mental maturity; (6) understanding of the factors involved in critical

reading; and (7), ability to read for literal comprehension.

Being concerned about the prerequisites for critical reading is not enough. Critical reading skills and abilities should be provided as an essential part of a good reading program.

The findings presented in this article may be summarized as follows:

1. A complete list of thirty-three critical reading skills was organized from 186 thinking abilities that appeared in ten recent basic series.
2. Only three of the skills were listed in all ten sets of basic readers.
3. The largest number of critical reading skills found in a single series was twenty-four while the smallest number was eleven.
4. Twenty-one of thirty-three critical reading skills are developed on all reading levels from preprimer through Grade 6.
5. Systematic and gradual development of critical reading skills is provided in several recent basic reading materials. However, the content in these readers might be expanded and improved to offer more practical application of the higher thinking skills.
6. Critical thinking, an essential reasoning ability, was listed in only one basic series.
7. There is some disagreement among educators concerning the critical reading skills that should be taught at the elementary school level.
8. Some of the important thinking skills are neglected or treated lightly in modern basic reading series.
9. Several basic reading series encourage the use of thinking skills in the content fields.
10. Well-prepared teachers' manuals have been provided to offer systematic guidance in the development of essential thinking skills. However, the non-use and misuse of these materials are responsible for the unfavorable practices that nurture inaccurate and purposeless reading skills.
11. In all ten sets of readers provisions are

made for developing the fundamental reasoning abilities required for active thinkers.

Implications for Teaching

Positive guidance can be directed toward the development of enduring habits of critical reading if these facts are considered:

1. Critical reading is intelligent reading that proceeds from simple reasoning to complex analysis in a series of logical steps.

2. The ability to do critical reading should be developed during the reading period of beginning reading instruction. At this time children should be encouraged to respond to the foundations that must be laid for critical reading.

3. Critical reading skills increase in complexity as the child advances from one reading to another.

4. A fundamental task of good teaching is to determine the critical reading background of the pupils and to take steps to provide the necessary experiences for developing the need for thinking skills.

5. Growth in critical reading ability cannot be encouraged and stimulated without knowledge of how the interpretive process operates and of the factors that influence it.

6. Literal comprehension skills rather than critical reading skills are emphasized in most standardized tests of reading.

7. Definite teaching techniques should be organized for the development of critical judgment and group thinking.

8. Pupils should be stimulated to comprehensive and critical thinking in reading situations.

9. Comprehending and using language for critical thinking is not receiving adequate stimulation in the average elementary classroom.

10. Adherence to a reading textbook without taking advantage of the excellent guidance offered in the accompanying manual will only foster haphazard reading habits.

References

1. Altick, Richard D., *Preface to Critical Reading*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1946.
2. Betts, Emmett A., "Guidance in the Critical Interpretation of Language," *Elementary English*, Vol. 27 (January, 1950), pp. 9-18, 22.
3. Betts, Emmett A., "Reading as a Thinking Process," *The National Elementary Principal*, Vol. 35 (September, 1955), pp. 88-96.
4. Betts, Emmett A., "Reading: Semantic Approach," *Education*, Vol. 69 (May, 1949), pp. 527-55.
5. Betts, Emmett A., "Research on Reading as a Thinking Process," *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 50 (September, 1956), pp. 1-16.
6. Black, Max, *Critical Thinking*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1954.
7. Causey, Oscar S. (Editor), *The Reading Teacher's Reader*, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1958.
8. Crossen, Helen J., "Effect of the Attitudes of the Reader upon Critical Reading Ability," *Journal Research*, Vol. 42 (December, 1948), pp. 289-98.
9. DeBoer, John J., "Cultivating Powers of Discrimination in Reading," *The School Review*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (January, 1949), pp. 28-36.
10. Dewey, John L., *How We Think*, D. C. Heath and Company, New York, 1933, pp. 84-85.
11. Durrell, Donald D., and Chambers, J. Richard, "Research in Thinking Abilities," *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (December, 1958), pp. 89-91.
12. Gans, Roma, *Critical Reading Comprehension in the Intermediate Grades*, Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 811, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1940.
13. Glaser, E. M., *An Experiment in the Development of Critical Reading*, Contributions to Education, No. 843, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1941.
14. Gray, William S. (Comp. and Ed.), *Basic Instruction in Elementary and High Schools*, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 65, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, October, 1948.
15. Gray, William S. (Comp. and Ed.), *Promoting Personal and Social Development Through Reading*, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 65, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, October, 1950.
16. Johnson, Marjorie S., "Factors in Reading Comprehension," *Educational Administration and Supervision* (November, 1949), pp. 385-406.
17. Packard, Charles E., "Critical Thinking and the Educative Process," *Education*, Vol. 68 (September, 1947), pp. 53-63.
18. *Reading in the Elementary School. Forty-Eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948.
19. *Report of the National Committee on Reading. Twenty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I*, Public

- School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1925.
20. Russell, David H., *Children's Thinking*, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1956.
 21. Smith, Nila B., *American Reading Instruction*, Silver, Burdett and Company, New York, 1934.
 22. The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, *Thirty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Part 1, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1937.
 23. Thorndike, Edward L., *Human Learning*, The Century Company, New York, 1931.
 24. Thorndike, Edward L., "Reading as Reasoning: A Study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 8 (June, 1917), p. 331.

RICHARD S. HAMPLEMAN

A Study of the Comparative Reading Achievements of Early and Late School Starters

Introduction

For approximately thirty years school people have been speculating about the problem of the best age at which to start teaching children to read. As a result of some early study of the problem, it was concluded that children were having difficulty with reading because they were being started too young. Some schools moved back the dates by which pupils had to be six years of age before they could start school in September, from February 15 or January 15 to January 1 or December 15, or even earlier. Other schools approached the problem from another angle—kept the same rule for entrance age, but saw to it that no pupils were put in beginning reading groups until they were six years of age or over.

Later studies began to indicate that perhaps other factors, more important than chronological age, also operate to affect the problem of the proper time to begin reading instruction. Mental age, teaching techniques, and certain reading readiness factors which might be strengthened by kindergarten and first grade pre-reading experiences, were now considered to be of more value in predicting readiness for reading than was chronological age.

It is the opinion of the author, however, that school people can get changes made in the chronological age requirement far more easily than they can get the public to accept school

entrance on the basis of mental age or reading readiness test scores. Therefore, to be practical, more study should be concentrated on that chronological age at which beginning reading can be taught most successfully.

The question this study will attempt to answer is, "Are pupils who start school at the age of six years four months or over better readers in the sixth grade than those who start school below the age of six years four months?"

It is the opinion of the author that there should be some important difference between the two groups. Those who are approximately one-half year older should be more successful in reading than the younger ones for three main reasons. Since they are older chronologically they will (1) be somewhat more advanced in mental age, (2) have more experiences to assist with readiness, and (3) have better eye coordination. Thus, even though chronological age by itself may not be an excellent prognosis for reading success, other factors which may be more important are advanced, to some extent, as chronological age advances.

Related Research

A review of related studies shows that the bulk of them were done in the 1920's and 1930's. All but one of them has studied the re-

Dr. Hampleman is on the faculty of Chico (California) State College.

lationship of various factors to reading achievement in grades one or two. One study uses fourth grade subjects.

One group of studies indicates that chronological age should be six years to give a child a satisfactory start in reading. Most of them say that age seven may be better if the child is immature physically, mentally, or emotionally. Correlations found between chronological age and reading achievement are .09 and .12.

Studies of the relationship between mental age and reading achievement show that a mental age of six to seven years is necessary for beginning reading. Correlations between these two factors range from .50 to .69.

The best predictors of reading success discovered in the literature were mental age, teacher rating in November, and various combinations of such factors as mental age, reading readiness tests, and teacher rating plans.

A number of studies point to other factors more important to success in beginning reading than any fixed chronological or mental age. These factors are individual attention to the needs of slow learners, rich experience background, reading programs centered around experiences, and quality of techniques and materials used. A conclusion running through these studies is that mere postponement in the time of beginning to teach reading will not in itself insure that all children will learn to read.

The present study is different in that it is the first to compare the relationship between school entrance age and eventual reading success as far along as the sixth grade.

Methods of Research

Data used in the study were obtained from the school office of the Bloomington, Indiana, Metropolitan School District. These facts were collected: date of birth, reading achievement score (age-equivalent) on the *Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Complete, Forms F and J*, date this test was administered,

and all available intelligence quotient scores.

Data were collected only for those children who entered the first grade in September, 1947, finished the sixth grade in June, 1953, and had all of their schooling in the Bloomington schools. Working with these criteria, 58 pupils out of 181 in the class were selected for study.

All of those who were six years, three months of age or younger at entrance were put in Group 1, and those who were six years, four months of age or over were placed in Group 2. Mean and median reading achievement scores were then figured for each group.

In order to be able to compare the mean and median achievement of the first and fourth quarters of the whole group of subjects, Group 1 was divided into two equal parts, Group 1A and Group 1B. Group 2 was divided into two nearly equal parts, Group 2A and 2B.

Intelligence test scores were not used in this study to equate the two groups. They were used only to assist in the analysis and interpretation of results. In that connection, the score used was the median I. Q. score of the three to six scores found for each child.

Analysis and Results

Table 1 will help clarify relationships in the analysis of the data which answers the main question of this study, "Are late school starters more successful in reading by the time they finish the sixth-grade than are early starters?" Group 2, the older children, have a mean reading achievement score slightly more than four months higher than Group 1. The median score for Group 2 shows them to be seven months superior. Intelligence quotients for the two groups are essentially the same, means both being 106, and medians being 108 for group 1 and 103 for Group 2. In mean chronological age, Group 2 is five months older. As a result of this data it is clear that those children who started to school at age six years, four months or more, as a group are superior in

TABLE 1. MEAN AND MEDIAN CHRONOLOGICAL AGE, INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT, AND READING ACHIEVEMENT SCORE OF TWO GROUPS

Group number	Mean chron. age*	Median chron. age*	Mean I. Q. score	Median I. Q. score	Mean read. ach. score*	Median read. ach. score*
2	146.51	146.00	106.25	103.00	148.86	146.00
1	141.53	141.50	106.13	108.00	144.70	139.00
Difference	4.98	4.50	0.12	-5.00*	4.16	7.00

*Expressed in months

*This difference is marked minus (-) to indicate that it is the reverse of all the other differences shown.

reading achievement at the sixth-grade level to their younger classmates.

The results shown by a comparison of data for Groups 1A and 2B (youngest and oldest quarters) are even more impressive. Table 2 shows the means and medians of these two

pected, the data was analyzed in one other way in an attempt to shed further light on the matter. Of the fifteen in Group 1A, there were only five up to grade level (143 months) in reading. Four of these five had an intelligence quotient of 110 or better. The fifth one had

TABLE 2. MEAN AND MEDIAN CHRONOLOGICAL AGE, INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT, AND READING SCORE FOR UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES

Group number	Mean age*	Median age*	Mean I. Q.	Median I. Q.	Mean reading score*	Median reading score*
2B	152.19	151.00	103.63	100.50	146.56	146.00
1A	144.27	144.00	103.27	100.00	139.73	135.00
Difference	7.92	7.00	0.36	0.50	6.83	11.00

*Expressed in months

groups along with the corresponding chronological ages. The mean of the oldest quarter, Group 2B, shows a superiority of almost seven months over the youngest quarter, Group 1A. Comparing these groups by medians shows an even greater superiority—eleven months. Intelligence quotients for the two groups are essentially the same in both mean and median scores. The older group has a mean difference in age from the younger group of almost eight months and a median difference of seven months.

Since the older group in this study, Group 2B, showed more superiority to Group 1A in reading achievement than might have been ex-

pected, the data was analyzed in one other way in an attempt to shed further light on the matter. Of the fifteen in Group 1A, there were only five up to grade level (143 months) in reading. Four of these five had an intelligence quotient of 110 or better. The fifth one had

an I. Q. of 99, yet was up to grade level. One who was not up to grade level (eight months below) had an intelligence quotient of 115. Of the sixteen in Group 2B, there were nine up to grade level and five of that nine achieved this with intelligence quotients below 110. One of these five had an intelligence quotient of 87. Six of the seven in Group 2B who did not achieve grade level had intelligence quotients below 100. The seventh one had a score of 102.

Conclusions

A comparison of the two groups, Group 1 and Group 2, indicates that there is an interest-

ing difference between them in reading achievement. Although it has been well established by earlier research that many factors may influence reading readiness, it seems fairly certain, as a result of this study, that school administrators can advise parents that their children have a considerably better chance for success in reading by starting to school a few months later, rather than a few months earlier. This would be especially important in those cases where birthdate causes doubt as to the best time to send a child to school. The administrator can be more confident of a good prognosis if an intelligence test is given. Those children who have a considerably higher intelligence quotient than 100 would have an excellent chance for success in reading even if they were only six years, three months of age or below. Those children with intelligence quotients below 100 would have very little chance for success in reading if they were this young.

The differences in reading achievement between the older and younger groups observed in this study, although not statistically significant, are nevertheless interesting enough to merit further attention. It is possible that such differences would be significant if the number of cases studied were larger. Such a study is now in progress.

Bibliography

1. Arthur, Grace, "A Quantitative Study of the Results of Grouping First-Grade Classes According to Mental Age," *Journal of Educational Research* 12:173-185, October, 1925.
2. Bigelow, Elizabeth B., "School Progress of Under-Age Children," *Elementary School Journal* 35:186-192, November, 1934.
3. Boney, C. DeWitt, and Agnew, Kate, "Periods of Awakening or Reading Readiness," *Elementary English Review* 14:183-187, May, 1937.
4. Davidson, Helen P., *An Experimental Study of Bright, Average, and Dull Children at the Four-Year Mental Level*, Genetic Psychology Monographs, Vol. 9, Nos. 3-4, Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts, 1931, pp. 119-289.
5. Dean, Charles D., "Predicting First-Grade Reading Achievement," *Elementary School Journal* 39:609-616, April, 1939.
6. Deputy, E. B., *Predicting First-Grade Reading Achievement, A Study in Reading Readiness*, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 426, New York, 1930, 61 pp.
7. Eames, Thomas, "Comparison of Children of Premature and Full Term Birth Who Fail in Reading," *Journal of Educational Research* 38: 506-508, March, 1945.
8. Gates, Arthur L., "The Necessary Mental Age for Beginning Reading," *Elementary School Journal* 37:497-508, March, 1937.
9. Gates, Arthur, and Bond, Guy L., "Reading Readiness: A Study of Factors Determining Success and Failure in Beginning Reading," *Teachers College Record* 37:679-685, May, 1936.
10. Hilliard, George H. and Troxell, Eleanore, "Informational Background as a Factor in Reading Readiness and Reading Progress," *Elementary School Journal* 38:255-263, December, 1937.
11. Monroe, Marion, *Children Who Cannot Read, The Analysis of Reading Disabilities and the Use of Diagnostic Tests in the Instruction of Retarded Readers*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1932, 205 pp.
12. Morphet, Mabel V. and Washburne, Carleton, "When Should Children Begin to Read?" *Elementary School Journal* 31:496-503, March, 1931.
13. Peterson, Inez B., "The Reading-Readiness Program of the Ironwood Public Schools," *Elementary School Journal* 37:438-446, February, 1937.
14. Reed, Mary M., *An Investigation of Practices in First Grade Admission and Promotion*, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 290, New York, 1927, 136 pp.
15. Samuels, Fra, "Sex Differences in Reading Achievement," *Journal of Educational Research* 36:594-603, April, 1943.
16. Thompson, J. L., "Big Gains from Postponed Reading," *Journal of Education* 117:445-446, October 15, 1934.
17. Wilson, Frank T., and Burke, Agnes, "Reading Readiness in a Progressive School," *Teachers College Record*, 38:565-580, April, 1937.
18. Wilson, Frank T., and Flemming, Cecile W., "Correlations of Reading Progress with Other Abilities and Traits in Grade I," *Journal of Genetic Psychology* 53:33-52, 1938.
19. Wright, Wendell W., *Reading Readiness—A Prognostic Study*, Bulletin of the School of Education, Indiana University, Vol. 12, No. 3, Bureau of Cooperative Research, Indiana University, June 1936, 46 pp.

Individualizing Reading Instruction - A Backward Look

"Is it desirable and practical to carry differentiation still further—to the complete individualization of instruction? This is the issue raised in this volume." Thus wrote Guy M. Whipple in his Editor's Preface to the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* of the National Society for the Study of Education Part II, copyright 1923, "Adapting the Schools to Individual Differences." If this quote was not dated, a person unfamiliar with the history of education might readily conclude that it had appeared in a recent periodical or book.

Today individualized instruction seems to be receiving the same amount of attention that was given to grouping in the thirties. Could it be though that our thinking and acting about individualizing instruction runs at least a quarter of a century behind the recommendations of leaders in education? Could it be that the widespread interest in individualized reading instruction and self-selection reflects only what authorities urged many years back? Could it be that we should reread what has already been said about individualizing instruction and then with this perspective examine our current practices? It could be.

It seems almost incredible that our earlier leaders should not only think about methods for improving reading instruction and providing for the widely differing individuals in our schools but also that they should produce in one volume a classic combination of these educational issues. Part I of the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* of the National Society for the Study of Education is "A Report of the National Committee on Reading." As already stated, Part II is on individual differences.

William S. Gray and Ernest Horn, two of the most highly respected educators on the cur-

rent scene, were members of both committees, chosen to prepare the two parts of the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook*. The former was also the chairman of the Committee on Reading. Other names appearing on both committees cause the list to read like a specially selected Who's Who in Education. The writings of these people reflect the good judgment of professional individuals genuinely concerned with the improvement of education. As Guy Whipple stated in the Editor's Preface to Part I the "... compilers have kept clearly differentiated what is known, what is merely the best opinion, and what is yet unknown and in urgent need of investigation."

Basic Reading for Individualizing Instruction

Even though much of the research currently available on human growth and development had not been done when the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* was written, certain principles emerged that were and still are important for education. (Part II, p. 6)

1. No group has yet been found in which the individuals composing it possess equal amounts of any one ability.
2. Performances vary so greatly as to indicate that no single requirement is adequate as a stimulus to a majority of the group.
3. To study the development of a learning process it is absurd to set up a standard a definite quantity of performance and expect each member of

Dr. Stauffer is Director of the Reading-Study Center of the University of Delaware, Newark. This paper originally appeared in the Proceedings of the University's annual reading conference.

the group to accomplish just that amount and no other.

In addition, the conditions under which children learn to produce other differences. All in all, the hierarchy of individuality sets as the first task for education the discovery of the amount of development that has occurred in each student; and, as a second task, the discovery of a means whereby greater ability may be developed.

Coaching the laggards by providing remedial instruction and enriching the curriculum for the bright are simply preliminaries to complete individualized instruction. Furthermore, the issues between individualized instruction and group instruction are really very minor in many respects. What must be kept in mind is that different amounts of time are required by different pupils for the mastery of given skills; that different amounts of practice and reinforcement are needed to develop abilities of different pupils; that different methods yield different results with different people; and, that attitudes and interests and motivations further distinguish individuals.

The primary consideration in schools, therefore, should be efficiency of instruction, rather than, as has so often been true, ease of administration. Where efficiency is the order, different attitudes and practices manifest themselves. Such habits as the habit of failure, of half-done work, of working below one's powers, of shirking, are replaced by opposite and more effective habits. As A. A. Sutherland of Los Angeles, California, wrote, "Individual differences among children, while disturbing to a system of education which tries to ignore them, are potentially the means by which human society may progress." (Part II, p. 30)

Attempts at Individualizing Instruction

If Preston Search, formerly Superintendent of Schools in Pueblo, Colorado, and Los Angeles, California, and Frederic Burk, formerly at San Francisco State Normal School could visit

the current scene and note the renewed concern about individualized instruction, they would feel that perhaps at last teachers are ready to break the lock-step in their classes. The lock-step meaning that all pupils in a class as one are required to move forward at the same rate, in the same book, mastering the same amount of material to the same degree of thoroughness. Search is referred to as the first voice in America raised loudly in protest against lock-step methods of teaching. He did so as long ago as 1888. In 1915, Burk's famous "Monograph C" was being widely read and reviewed because it showed the results of two years of work toward individualized instruction.

Mary Ward and others in their section of Part II of the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* say that for many years Dr. Burk was a student of individual differences and an ardent foe of anything that savored of the lock-step in education. A feature of his plan was that while individual progress was provided for, abundant opportunity was afforded for group work.

It is indeed true that today recommended practices for the teaching of reading go well beyond the "Monograph C" approach. The "home reader" is now the school reader, and reading is taught and tested in school. Reading vocabulary studies initiated then have been extended and refined. As then, "wider opportunity is given for individuals to follow their own tastes" (Part II, p. 70) but at an earlier level. The basic intent of breaking the lock-step is still the same—individualizing instruction.

In Burk's day, the concern was with breaking the lock-step in situations where all pupils in a class were taught as one. Today, in most instances we've broken this pattern, so that in most classrooms a minimum of three groups are identified in each class, and instruction is differentiated for each group. All this does, however, is simply to commit the same errors on a smaller scale from what whole class in-

struction did on a larger scale. In fact, in some schools this attempt at ability-grouping and homogeneity-seeking is sought after so eagerly that all pupils in grades four, five, and six are reshuffled for reading instruction. This is done so that pupils at the so-called "same level" can be instructed together as a class by a teacher who supposedly has become an expert at teaching skills at a particular level. Study and research as long ago as 1924 showed that the difference between the central tendencies of even the highest and lowest groups is less than the range of abilities within any one group. This may mean that as many as one-fourth of the middle group may make as good a record as the bottom half of the best group.

Also in Burk's day emphasis was shifted to "understanding of the story read, rather than parrot-like repetition of words." (Part II, p. 70) Oral reading in the usual sense was not to be done and as they said, "No child is required to listen to another read and explain what he himself has already read." (Part II, p. 70) Today, the "Round-the-robin oral-reading" performance has been largely eliminated. Now, however, there is strong opposition to the methods so widely practiced in reading instruction which results in "Round-the-robin comprehension." This is the procedure in which the teacher sets the purposes and asks the questions, usually factual in nature, and pupils play back the text, usually verbatim. There is no reflection, no weighing of facts and inferences, no judging and no generalization. The consequence of such reading is a non-thinking, parroting of the text that is even more costly to members of a free society than were the results of the oral reading method.

Later, the Winnetka technique of individual education as directed by Carleton W. Washburne, at one time an associate of Burk's, adapted the "Monograph C" recommendations to a public school system. In the Winnetka technique, instead of varying quality, time was varied. In other words, a child could take as

much time as he needed to master a skill, but he had to master it. Some of the things that the teacher did under this system read very much like the so-called new ideas urged under the current drive toward Individualized Reading Instruction. To quote: "The teacher, under this plan, spends her whole time teaching, not listening to recitations. She helps an individual here or a group there; she encourages and supervises. She is about among the children as they work, not at her desk." (Part II, p. 80)

Time was allowed, too, for group and creative activities. Thus, the Winnetka plan not only allowed for flexibility of time but also for different interests and abilities as the curriculum was adapted to individual differences.

At the time Washburne was inaugurating the Winnetka plan, Helen Parkhurst started another form of individual instruction known as the Dalton Plan. This plan drew international attention.

Miss Parkhurst said her plan was a sociological rather than a curricular experiment. Its aim was to keep school life from becoming mechanical by socializing the school. It was a vehicle for the curriculum and concentrated more on the life of the school. There were three basic principles: first, the principle of freedom; this meant freedom to work without interruption in order to pursue an interest and to develop concentration. Second, the interaction of group life; or community living was brought about by having subject laboratories and specialists, and the pupils of four or five grades have access to a laboratory. And, third, the allowing of individuals to budget their time according to their own needs and difficulties. The plan's basic philosophy was to have pupils function as individual members of a social community.

Of course, the Dalton Plan was applicable only to any part of the school *starting with the fourth grade*. It was supposed that students of that age and stage had sufficient command over the tool subjects (reading, for instance) to work independently and easily. The plan aimed

to combine class work, but most important was the training it gave pupils *to handle a job, to manage time, and to plan work.*

Other plans are described in the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Part II*, but generally two types of plans were presented. One tried to make adjustment for individuals without breaking up the basic class organization; the other provided for strictly individual progress in the common essentials with provision for compensating socialized activities.

Interestingly enough, in the same yearbook the writers provide evidence that what they had done might be only half-way measures. But they hoped that the day would soon be at hand when each child would be recognized as a living human being, differing from every other human being in his needs and in the contributions he can make, yet a member of society who must coordinate his life with that of his fellow members.

Some of the questions raised and problems to be solved were also listed. What sort of textbooks and tests should be used? How could schools shift with what they now had? What kind of time schedule should be followed? Should children be kept together in classes, with differentiated assignments? How large should classes be? How could the attitude of teachers be changed so that they could make individual work a success?

In the answering chapters some ideas occur with considerable frequency. Individualized teaching and learning does not mean that it is solitary. The details of the action will have to be, in a large measure, self-directed. In reading there must be an abundance of self-directed, spontaneous reading of books, magazines, and newspapers. "This can have no resemblance to the reading of normal living if great masses of individuals must be assigned the reading at the same time, in class fashion, of the same newspapers, the same magazines, and the same books." (Part II, p. 226) The individual is

social-minded and will want to discuss what he reads and profit by the discussion. Small groups, spontaneously formed, are best to stimulate the turning over of ideas in the mind, of seeing their significance and relationships, and otherwise digesting and assimilating them. Teaching must be vigorous, inspiring, and high-minded. Individualized teaching requires a sufficiency of group activities.

There can be no such thing as a uniform standard to be achieved equally by all pupils. Each pupil must be assisted to go as far as he will or as far as he can. To develop necessary skills may require more time and more effort for some pupils than for others. There must be constant measurement. Text books will need to be provided which give sufficient facts, knowledges, and skills. Individualized reading may not be "busy-work or padding." Large classes seriously decrease the advantages of individualized instruction. The teacher is a teacher of children rather than a hearer of lessons. Careful methods of recording progress must be adopted. The good teacher will take the child into partnership and strive to help him help himself. The training of teachers must bring this point of view to prospective teachers.

The recommendations for individualizing the work in a school given by Carleton W. Washburne by way of summary could well be repeated here. Some of the key suggestions are: (Part II, p. 271)

1. Select one or a few teachers who are likely to make the experiment a success. Secure their whole-hearted interest and cooperation.
6. Prepare a simple record system to keep track of children's individual progress.
8. Abandon all recitations in the individualized subjects, substituting supervised study and objective tests for the recitations.
10. Keep the parents in close touch with the salient features as these become accomplished facts.

Some of those not listed here are applicable largely in situations where specifically structured plans such as the Winnetka Plan were to be used. The current thinking again about individualized reading instruction skirts the shortcomings of such rigid patterns, but should not skirt the good points.

In his appraisal chapter Kilpatrick looked carefully at only the Dalton Plan and the Winnetka Plan. He pointed to such common features as—acquiring a better sense of responsibility, better time-budgeting, improved social relationships, and better self-respect. Indeed, as stated earlier, critics of the time recognized the half-way measures of some of these specific plans, but as implied throughout this review, the critics of today should fully appreciate the values of these plans and go on from there.

Reading Activities in School and Social Life

Thus far, attention has been given almost entirely to Part II of the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook*, "Adapting the Schools to Individual Differences." This, in many ways, might be called the forgotten part of the Yearbook. Now attention needs to be given to the better known Part I on Reading. As a matter of fact, the subtitle for this section is the title for the first chapter of the Yearbook, Part I. It is used here again because it so well reflects the timely thinking of the Yearbook authors.

The point of view of the Committee was to encourage instruction in reading that would enable pupils to engage effectively in desirable life activities. This was to be accomplished by taking into account the types of reading experiences that people do and should learn to do better. The reading experiences they referred to were activities in modern life as well as in school.

They recognized as the most important changes of the first quarter of the twentieth century the enrichment of the course of study whereby wide reading opportunities in many

fields replaced a few textbooks. It followed naturally from this that good reading instruction had to provide help in all school activities involving reading. Paralleling this was a clearer recognition that people read for a wide variety of purposes and that the habits employed in reading must be sufficiently sound and the skills sufficiently varied to change with purposes for reading and the kinds of materials used.

This declaration concerning the purposes for which people read and the materials used to accomplish their purposes led to a better recognition of the value of individualizing instruction. If reading was to enable each reader to participate intelligently in the thought life of the world about him, his thinking powers had to be stimulated by reading so that he could be a well-informed, thinking citizen with desirable interests, standards, tastes, and habits.

World War I had alerted the American people to the large number of non-reading adults. This, along with investigations in reading, led to another conclusion of great significance—one that influenced decidedly the movement toward greater differentiation of instruction—the importance of permanent interests in reading.

If, in the future, reading instruction was not only to teach pupils to read but also to broaden the horizon of the reader, stimulate permanent interests, and foster vigorous use of thinking powers, then instruction would need to be differentiated. Each pupil would need to be stimulated so as to reach his fullest measure of growth. As a matter of fact, one phrase that occurs again and again throughout the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* report on Reading is "differentiated reading instruction." The Yearbook Committee would have acted fittingly if they had labeled Part I of the Yearbook *Differentiating Reading Instruction* to parallel the excellent title for Part II, *Adapting the Schools to Individual Differences*.

The modern reading program (1924) detailed in Chapter III recognized the need for differentiated instruction at all levels. The section dealing with the initial period of reading instruction begins with a discussion of the wide differences among pupils entering first grade. Children are different in intellect, experience, and interests when they enter school. It is not poor teaching that makes them different as had once been thought. But it is good teaching which capitalizes on the differences and helps each pupil advance according to his best potential. The discussion is climaxed with the following sentence: "In order to provide appropriate instruction for them they must either be taught individually or in groups which are more or less homogeneous." (Part I, p. 32) While many of the essential activities listed are for group instruction using common materials for all in the group, the seed is sown for the individualization of instruction by repeated referrals to the (1) need for instruction in reading with all classroom activities and (2) for independent and directed reading to stimulate personal interests and develop permanent habits of reading.

This recognition of the need for differentiated instruction from the very beginning is repeated again and again with increasing clarity and detail at successive levels. In the discussion of the program outlined for the intermediate grades the following two points are made: "... the fact cannot be emphasized too vigorously that the essential aims of instruction are attained primarily through wide reading," (Part I, p. 58) and "Each teacher should study the needs of her pupils so carefully and provide appropriate group and individual instruction so effectively that no pupil will reach the end of the sixth grade who has not formed desirable reading attitudes, habits, and skills." (Part I, p. 62)

"Provision for Individual Differences" is the title of Chapter VIII. By devoting a chapter to this method of instruction it may once more

be assumed that the Committee did so to show the significance they attached to it. Some of the charges leveled at traditional methods could very easily be thought of as occurring in a 1959 periodical: for instance, "Whole classes are provided with the same articles of reading diet on the same day. Too often the diet is meager and the daily portion insufficient. Freshness and variety are noticeably lacking. Selections are served and rehashed so many times that appetites are systematically dulled." (Part I, p. 227)

Then the report goes on to point out that one of the measures of how effective reading instruction has been is the amount of time which each pupil devotes to reading. By this they meant, reading to satisfy his own purposes, at his own rate, and with appropriate material.

Once again, it is true that to a considerable degree only the seed was being sown for the individualizing of reading instruction. The specifics presented in the eighth chapter are concerned largely with flexible grouping, multiple assignments, and independent work. However, in the paragraph discussing grouping appears the following pertinent statement, "Varying tastes and interests are the bases for the selection of varied materials and also point to the need for an organization of classroom procedures which permits a reasonable amount of choice in the selection of materials." (Part I, p. 229) That this recommendation should foster the self-selection practice and the procedure whereby all pupils are instructed individually is readily perceived.

At the same time the Committee recognized two extreme positions—mass instruction and individual instruction. So they added: "... no doubt the best way lies somewhere between the two or in a combination of group and individual work." (Part I, p. 231) What they sought was to have each pupil attain maximum growth with the least amount of waste and the most satisfaction.

Finally, in the last chapter or the summary chapter they direct attention to twelve issues of fundamental importance to a satisfactory program for teaching of reading. The tenth point is: "10. Adequate provision for differences in individual capacities, needs, and tastes." (Part I, p. 306) Another part of this chapter lists problems in urgent need of investigation. The first one listed is *classroom organization*, the sixth is *the relative effectiveness of different teaching procedures*. Much of what has been written in the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* is necessarily tentative in character. Before final conclusions can be reached much additional evidence is needed.

In Summary

It seems clear now that a review of the principles and practices stated and outlined in the two parts of the *Twenty-fourth Yearbook* was timely and worthwhile. It should have pointed up a number of things.

Authorities writing in the early twenties and reflecting the experiences and insights accumulated during the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century wrote with amazing discernment, acumen, and far-sightedness. The principles they declared are

sound and reflect recognition of the role of an individual in a free society, the need for accurate communication, and the need for people schooled in the art of independent thinking, wide reading, and considered judgments. The practices they described were as they themselves indicated half-way measures.

Now then a quarter of a century later are we about to develop practices that are more than half-way measures? It seems that we are. The flood of reports dealing with how classroom teachers are actually teaching reading indicate that the momentum for individualizing of instruction is increasing. It may be that the quarter century we are now in may provide us with the skills and techniques essential to expert differentiation of instruction.

Lagging behind the recommendations of authorities by a quarter of a century is not too astonishing. Acquiring newer, better practices is by circumstances slow because it involves all the people. Traditions of practices and procedures are not easily put aside. From this we must learn not to be disheartened but to work on courageously and steadily, assured that what we are doing is taking us down the road toward better education.

The new edition of *Current Books, Junior Booklist of the Secondary Education Board*, is just off the press. The editor is Lois R. Markley. Publisher, Secondary Education Board, Milton 86, Massachusetts.

The annual workshop in children's literature will be held at Appalachian State Teachers College at Boone, North Carolina, directed by Miss Beulah Campbell from August 3 through August 14, 1959. Virginia Sorensen, Richard Chase, Wesley Dennis, James Daugherty, Benjamin Elkin, Victoria Johnson, Margaret McElderry, and William O. Steele will serve as consultants.

Our Alvina T. Burrows is author of the new pamphlet, *Teaching Composition*, No. 18 in the series "What Research Says to the Teacher." Order from National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth St., Washington 6, D. C. Price, \$0.25.

Periodicals for Children and Youth

- American Childhood.* 74 Park Street, Springfield, Massachusetts. (5-9 years) Educational magazine published for kindergarten and primary grades, 10 months of the year, Sept.-June. 1 year, \$4.
- American Farm Youth.* Jackson at Van Buren, Danville, Illinois. (Boys, 14-24 years) Published nine months of the year, Sept.-May.
- American Girl.* 830 Third Avenue, New York 22, New York. (Girls, 10-16 years, whether they belong to Girl Scouts or not) Published monthly by the Girl Scouts of America. Not denominational.
- American Junior Red Cross Journal.* 18th and E Streets, Washington 13, D. C. (Junior High and High School) Not church connected. Published by the American National Red Cross and distributed mainly to schools enrolled in the Junior Red Cross. Subscriptions accepted, but actually publications are designed as program material for the membership.
- American Junior Red Cross News.* 18th and E Streets, Washington 13, D. C. Same as *American Junior Red Cross Journal*, but on elementary school level.
- Arts and Activities.* 8150 N. Central Park Avenue, Skokie, Illinois. No church connection. (5-12 years) Published 10 months of the year—not July and August.
- Audubon Magazine.* 1130 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, New York. (15 years and up) Published by the National Audubon Society.
- Boy's Life.* 2 Park Avenue, New York 16, New York. (Scouts and others, 8-18 years) Published by Boy Scouts of America.
- Boys and Girls.* Otterbein Press, Dayton 2, Ohio. (Children in grades 4, 5, and 6) Weekly periodical-story paper for distribution in church schools of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.
- Catholic Boy, The.* Notre Dame, Indiana. (Boys 11-16 years) Published monthly except July and August by the Holy Cross Fathers, Roman Catholic order of priests.
- Catholic Miss of America.* 25 Groverland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, Minnesota. (Catholic girls, 11-17 years) Edited for use in Catholic schools.
- Child Life.* 30 Federal Street, Boston 10, Massachusetts. (3-10 years) Published 10 months of the year.
- Children's Digest.* 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York 17, New York. (7-12 years) Not church connected.
- Children's Friend.* Augsburg Publishing House, 426 S. 5th St., Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Grades 3 and 4) Published by Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- Children's Friend, The.* 40 North Main Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. (4-12 years) Protestant. Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints ("Mormon").
- Children's Play Mate Magazine.* 3025 East 75th Street, Cleveland 4, Ohio. (6-12 years) Not church connected.
- Co-Ed.* Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd St., New York 36, New York. (Homemaking classes, grades 7-12) Teachers ordering 10 or more subscriptions to *Co-Ed* receive a free copy of the teacher's edition.
- Current Events.* American Education Publications, Education Center, Columbus 16, Ohio. (Grades 6, 7, and 8) Eight-page current events paper.
- Current Science and Aviation.* American Education Publications, Education Center, Columbus, 16, Ohio. (Grades 7-12) Weekly science newspaper, eight pages.
- Every Week.* American Education Publications, Education Center, 400 Front Street, Columbus 16, Ohio. (Grades 9 and 10) Especially designed for use in world history, civics, and geography classes.
- Explorer.* Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York. (Grade 4) Stories, news and activities. Published weekly during school year.
- Field and Stream.* 530 Fifth Avenue, New York New York. Not a children's magazine, but the magazine is read by many teen-age boys, because they find a great deal in each issue that guides them in sportsmanship.
- Flying.* Davis Publishing Company, 1 Park Avenue, New York 17, New York. Average age of reader 31 years.

Dr. Horn is Professor of Education at the University of Texas.

- Flying Models*. 215 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York. (12-21 years) Not church connected. Aimed at model builders of all ages.
- Forest and Outdoors*. 4795 St. Catherine Street W., Montreal 6, Canada. No particular age range.
- Friendways*. Fifth and Chestnut Streets, Anderson, Indiana. (Boys and girls, 9-12 years) Magazine re-named—was called *Comrade*. Published by Gospel Trumpet Company as a church school publication for the Church of God.
- Geographic School Bulletins*. National Geographic Society, 16th and M Streets, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Weekly bulletin used by children from 5th and 6th grades on up through college, but there are more readers in junior and senior high level than in elementary grades.
- Hi*. Publication for Catholic Youth, 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, Minnesota. (Catholic boys and girls, ages 9, 10, and 11) Religious, educational, recreational in content, and edited especially for use in Catholic schools.
- Highlights for Children*. 968 Main Street, Honesdale, Pennsylvania. (2-12 years) Nonsectarian religious content. \$5 a year, but \$4 when sent to school or library address.
- Humpty Dumpty*. 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York. (3-7 years).
- Jack and Jill*. Curtis Publishing Company, Independence Square, Philadelphia 5, Pennsylvania. (5-10 years) Boys and girls of primary and pre-intermediate grades.
- Junior Bazaar for Children*. 572 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York. *Harper's Junior Bazaar* no longer exists as such, but was incorporated into *Harper's Bazaar*. Consists of fashions for children, and appears every odd month. No less than four pages.
- Junior Catholic Messenger*. 38 West Fifth Street, Dayton 2, Ohio. (Catholic children in 4th, 5th, and 6th grades) Published weekly during school year.
- Junior Life*. Hamilton Avenue at 8100, Cincinnati 31, Ohio. (9-12 years) Largest distribution among the Christian churches.
- Junior Natural History Magazine*. American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, New York. (8-15 years) Not church connected. Popular introduction to all phases of natural history.
- Junior Review*. Civic Education Service, 1733 K Street N. W., Washington 6, D. C. (Junior High School). Not church connected. Eight-page paper. Gives students a clear, stimulating introduction to national and world problems.
- Literary Cavalcade*. Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York. Modern Literature, creative writing for grades 9-12.
- Little Catholic Messenger*. 38 West Fifth Street, Dayton 2, Ohio. (Catholic children in grades 1, 2, and 3) Published weekly during school year.
- Little Mine*. Publications for Catholic Youth, 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, Minnesota. (Catholic children age 5-kinder-garten)
- Mine One*. Publications for Catholic Youth, 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Catholic first grade children, age 6.)
- Mine Two*. Publications for Catholic Youth, 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, Minnesota. (Catholic second grade children, age 7)
- Mine Three*. Publications for Catholic Youth, 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, Minnesota. (Catholic third grade children, age 8)
- Model Airplane News*. 551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York. Junior aviation science. Not a child's publication, but about 30,000 8-12 year-olds read this magazine.
- My Sunday Paper*. Cook Publishing Company, Elgin, Illinois. (6-8 years) Was named *Dew Drops*, but was changed in July, 1953. A take-home paper for Sunday schools. Non-denominational, serving churches of many different denominations.
- National Geographic Magazine*. National Geographic Society, 16th and M. Streets, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Issued monthly, no religious affiliation.
- Natural History Magazine*. American Museum of Natural History, 79th Street and Central Park West, New York 24, New York. (14 years and older—mostly college and adult) Not church connected. 10 issues annually.
- Nature Magazine*. 1214 16th Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Actually an adult publication, but goes into over 15,000 elemen-

- rary schools and libraries where it is used for reference on elementary science, biology, and nature study, etc.
- Newstime*. Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York. (Grade 5) Language Arts, Social Studies, Science.
- Our Times*. American Education Publications, Education Center, Columbus 16, Ohio. (Grades 11 and 12) Eight-page paper designed to meet needs of U. S. History, economics, advanced civics, and senior problems courses.
- Our Young People*. 426 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis 15, Minnesota. (12-17 years) Lutheran. Eight-page Sunday school story paper.
- Outdoor Life*. 353 Fourth Avenue, New York, 10, New York. Not a children's magazine.
- Practical English*. Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York. (Grades 9-12) English.
- Read*. American Education Publications, Education Center, Columbus 16, Ohio, (Grades 6-9) Balanced variety of the best in current reading for both English and social studies classes. 32 pages, two times each month.
- Scholastic Magazine*. *Junior Scholastic* for Junior High School, English and social studies, *Senior Scholastic* for Senior High School, social studies. 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York.
- The Sentinel*. 127 Ninth Avenue N., Nashville 3, Tennessee. (9-12 years) Eight pages, published by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, distributed through Southern Baptist Sunday schools.
- Seventeen*. 488 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York. (Girls, 13-19 years.) No religious affiliation.
- Sporting News*. 2018 Washington Avenue, St. Louis 3, Missouri. (age 16 on up) Digest of baseball news, published weekly.
- Sports Afield*. Hearst Magazines Division of the Hearst Corp., 959 Eighth Avenue, New York 19, New York. No fiction—editorial format designed for hunter, fisherman, and boating enthusiast. Not a child's magazine primarily, but many interested young people find it interesting and informative.
- Storytime*. 127 Ninth Avenue, N., Nashville 3, Tennessee. (4-8 years) Four pages, published by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, distributed through Southern Baptist Sunday schools.
- Stories for Primary Children*. 930 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania. (4-8 years) Published by Presbyterian church, but some churches of other denominations subscribe to it also.
- Straight*. The Standard Publishing Foundation, Hamilton Avenue at 8100, Cincinnati 31, Ohio. *Straight* replaces *Boy Life* magazine (last issue Sept. 30, 1951). 12-15 years Published weekly. Not church connected.
- Teen Time*. Winona Lake, Indiana. (Junior high and high school) Free Methodist.
- Trailblazer*. Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania. (9-11 years) Published by Presbyterian church, but some churches of other denominations subscribe to it also.
- Twelve/Fifteen*. 201 Eighth Avenue, Nashville 2, Tennessee. Replaces *Boys Today* and *Girls Today*. (12-15 years, Junior high) Co-educational weekly magazine circulated to boys and girls in Methodist church schools in the United States.
- Upward*. 127 Ninth Avenue, N., Nashville 3, Tennessee. (13-16) Sixteen pages, published by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, distributed through Southern Baptist Sunday schools.
- World Week*. 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, New York. (Grades 8-10) social studies.
- Woe Wisdom*. Lee's Summit, Missouri, (children 5-13 years of age) Not church connected.
- Young Catholic Messenger*. 38 West 5th Street, Dayton 2, Ohio. (Catholic youth, grades 6-9) Published weekly during school year.
- Young Judaea*. 47 West 63rd Street, New York 2, New York. (9-13 years) Published monthly. Designed for junior members of Young Judaea, under auspices of Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah.
- Young Perfectionist*, *The Harper's Junior Bazaar* incorporated into *Harper's Bazaar*. 572 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York. Consists of about 10 pages of fashions for the younger set every month.

Councilletter

A Look Backward - A Glimpse Ahead

Although the limits set for my reminiscences begin with the pre-convention session of the Executive Committee in 1955, my recollections and my association with the Council go back to the year 1933 when I responded to a call for help from a good friend who could not be present at the Detroit meeting. By asking me to take a responsibility, she introduced me to an organization to which my interest in children's literature should have drawn me earlier. When the Commission on the English Curriculum came into existence in 1945, I became a regular attendant at Council meetings. In 1952 I had the privilege of serving as Second Vice President.

Over this relatively long period of time there has been an opportunity to see the growth of the Council. During the past four years the Fifty by Sixty goal has been more than realized. There are a number of reasons for such phenomenal growth from a comparatively small group concentrated at the secondary school level, to an organization encompassing elementary, college, and graduate levels; one that has prestige and recognition in the field of education. The increase in services provided has no doubt been a factor. The scope and quality of program offerings at the annual meetings is one of the elements that has contributed to expansion. The publications, especially the volume entitled *The English Language Arts in the Secondary School* which appeared in 1956, have emphasized the continuity in the work of the Commission on the English Curriculum. The tours abroad, the plans for presence of visitors from other countries at the annual meetings, and the activities of the international committee point toward enlarging the Council's scope of activity in another direction. Our Executive Secretary has been authorized to spend a week with the

NCTE European Tour 1959 in England, and to visit Paris. Both of the activities are in the interest of exploring possibilities for informal contacts with any group of teachers organized to promote the teaching of English. Who knows how soon we may be a part of an International Council of Teachers of English! Today in many countries of the world it is British English that is taught and it is to Britain that teachers from the European countries have gone to perfect their English through grants for summer courses. In the summer of 1958 a group of Russian teachers had such a course at the University of Edinburgh, and their opposite numbers perfected their use of the Russian language at Russian universities. In the process, both groups contributed to international understanding in a practical personal way. Over a period of years, groups from other countries have visited Britain for a similar purpose.

Our Executive Secretary has recently pointed out that before 1956 the Council co-sponsored very few workshops. But beginning in that year the number of such projects has remained steady or has increased. There is every evidence that such workshops will grow in number as the Council cooperates with groups and institutions, and determines a policy with respect to the scope and the continuity in such activities. If some of the basic issues in English are to be resolved between and among the elementary, secondary, college and university, and graduate levels, there must be opportunities through regional and state workshops to bring together teachers from all of these levels. For some part of such workshops all members will need to work together on a common problem. Within the same framework there should be opportunity for work by levels, and also in terms of interests in poetry, in dramatics, in creative

writing, or a number of other areas. The influence of such experiences on attitudes and practices could be immeasurable.

With the building of a Headquarters the membership will have a better opportunity to contribute to the influence of the organization. The present building limitations have tended to emphasize the production and distribution of materials as the important activity at Headquarters. But in the new building the center for curriculum and materials offers almost limitless possibilities for providing consultant service to individuals and groups on the job, and at the center. The center can provide seminar facilities for committees from state or local communities on a broad basis, since materials can be assembled not only from all parts of the United States, but from other parts of the world as well. As I visualize this center it

might well include various interpretations of the classroom as a learning laboratory. A room capable of adaptation in many ways or a series of dioramas picturing functional classrooms might offer suggestions. For the teacher of English in the year 2,000 may work in a very different setting from that of today.

The Executive Committee makes constant evaluation of the organization of the Council in all its ramifications—committees, bulletins, official magazines, and cooperative efforts with other groups. Such continuing evaluation is needed in order to keep all activities moving in a coordinated fashion. The future holds exciting and stimulating experiences for all those who work with and for the National Council of Teachers of English.

Helen K. Mackintosh
Past President

In the article, "Individualized Reading *vs.* Textbook Instruction," by Ben A. Bohnhorst and Sophia U. Sellars, which appeared in our March issue, the references were accidentally omitted. They are as follows:

1. Lazar, May, "Individualized Reading," *Education*, Vol. 78, No. 5, January, 1958.
2. McCullough, Constance M., "Reading," *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April, 1958.
3. Miel, Alice, editor, *Individualized Reading Practices*, Bulletin No. 14: Practical Suggestions for Teaching, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1958.
4. Yoakam, Gerald A., *Basal Reading Instruction*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1955.

Congratulations to our colleague, Dwight H. Burton, editor of the *English Journal*, upon the publication of his fine new book, *Literature Study in the High Schools* (Holt, 1959). This volume will be of interest to teachers of children's literature in the elementary and junior high schools as well as to teachers of English in the senior high school.

Windows on the World

The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by IRIS VINTON¹



Iris Vinton

The Movies Come of Age

The movies have emerged from some pretty bad times and they are all the better for it. What they suffered while the fickle and feckless public amused itself with the new toys of radio and television was not in vain. Born just before the 19th Century drew to a close, the movies grew up rather quickly during their recent period of trial. And film producers found, which should have come as no surprise to them, that there was a grown-up audience patiently waiting for adult screen fare. They discovered, too, that there was an audience of young as well as older people who wanted something more brain tingling than big and little stars cavorting in various rainbow-tinted taradiddles on wide screen.

I talked with two people important in the motion picture world to find out what had brought about a change in the movies. I first consulted Albert Johnston, who has been associated with Columbia Pictures since 1945 and has been their Eastern story editor for the past eight years. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he has written plays, short stories, and poetry. He received The National Theater Conference Award in 1949. *Pablo's Mountain*, his moving and thoughtful novel about a family's attempt to put down roots in a strange, new world was published by Crown in 1953.

"More and more the movies are turning to books for their material," Mr. Johnston said. "The quality of movies is improved because books of literary value by good writers are being used. We rarely have an original story written for a movie today. That is precisely the opposite of what happened in the past. The early movies were played by ear, as it were.

The famous early producers put a story together, changing and shifting to suit their individual tastes in scenic and dramatic effect. Often a writer or writers were employed to do a movie on the subject of, say, 'A Thief of Old Cathay.' The film might be in the shooting stage when the producer suddenly got the idea for a gorgeous sequence with elephants—and this actually occurred—so the locale of the picture was changed to a part of Cathay where elephants, if they did not abound, at least could be found. It mattered little if the original story was lost sight of completely."

Formerly, the movies would not tackle books which presented difficult problems in production. Now a producer, when he feels assured that he has a fine "property," is willing to use imagination and ingenuity and every resource of skill and technique to hurdle the obstacles. *The Bridge on the River Kwai* is an example of what can be done by the modern movie-maker who is concerned with the screen play as a work of real and lasting value.

Andersonville, (by MacKinlay Kantor) which Columbia Pictures has in preparation, will be a major production. The company paid a top price to the author. The book presented all kinds of production problems, Mr. Johnston said, but the effort which it will take to translate this great novel to the screen would be well worth it. "The picture may turn out to be one of the screen's great classics," he predicted.

From the list of movies either to be pro-

¹This monthly feature is sponsored by the Women's National Book Association. Miss Vinton is Director of the Publications Department of Boys' Clubs of America, and is a member of the Board of Managers of the WNBA.

duced by Columbia Pictures or by independent producers and distributed by Columbia, Mr. Johnston called particular attention to: *They Came to Cordura* by Glendon Swarthout, *The Last Angry Man* by Gerald Green, *Bent's Fort*, *Time of the Dragons*, *The Mysterious Island* by Jules Verne, *Gulliver's Travels*, *The Mouse That Roared*, *The Image Makers* by Bernard Dreyer, *Lord of the Flies* (the movie of this Golding novel will be made in England), *The Long Ships* by Frans Bengtsson (also to be made in England), *The Mountain Road* by Theodore White, *Strangers When We Meet* by Evan Hunter, *Anatomy of a Murder* by Robert Traver, *The Devil at Four O'Clock* by Max Catto, *The Other Side of the Coin* by Pierre Boulle, *The Guns of Navarone* by Alistair Maclean, *The Franz Liszt Story*. Of these only the last is an original story especially written for the screen; all others are from books and literary material.

"We have raised our sights," Mr. Johnston stated. "We find that pictures of better quality are paying off. There has been a growth in the public, too. Quality is understood and demanded by an increasing number of people."

Another point that Mr. Johnston made is that the American movie industry depends upon foreign sales for a good portion of its income. Many who have deplored the mediocre (and worse) movies which were sent abroad for foreign consumption can take heart if what Americans have to offer in the future is of high quality. Most of the motion pictures listed above will have foreign sales, since all of them have what might be termed "universal identification." For acceptance abroad, according to Mr. Johnston, a movie must have material with which the different nationalities are familiar, either because the situations are general human experiences or because people generally have vicarious associations with them. For instance, our "Westerns" find international acceptance since over the years people in many countries have become only too thoroughly

acquainted with them.

Annie Laurie Williams, to whom I went next about the change in movies today, is the internationally known motion picture, TV and play agent. She is a pioneer in the field and is responsible for bringing to the screen such novels as *Gone With the Wind*, Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* and a host of others. She was the agent for a number of the forthcoming movies which will be produced or distributed by Columbia Pictures, including *The Mouse That Roared* and *Time of the Dragons*, the first by Leonard Wibberley and the second by Alice Eckhardt-Rothholtz.

"We have movies of quality in continuing greater numbers at present," Miss Williams told me, "because the industry is buying good literary material and translating it with the best professional skill to the screen. The majority of motion pictures are based on books. The books are selected not alone for their popularity or because they are best sellers, although wide readership insures wide movie audiences, but they are chosen also for their dramatic story value, the vitality of their characters, and for their fine literary values."

Other than the trend toward quality, Miss Williams noted another significant trend: the shifting of the focus of the motion picture industry from Hollywood to New York City. Because movies are using book material almost exclusively, the focal point becomes that where books are published—New York for the most part. Arrangements are made in this city for the majority of motion pictures.

The independent producer, too, Miss Williams declared, has come into prominence. It is no longer the big company that controls picture making, therefore there is greater individuality in movies today than in the past. The independent producer will take a chance with an unusual story, explore a new and exciting approach, experiment with a different sort of picture, have the courage to be nonconformist. A company, such as Columbia Pictures, acts

as distributor for the efforts of many independents who want to create a movie of artistic worth, an instance being Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*.

"There is decentralization of the actual movie making," Miss Williams said. "Once upon a time, movies were made in Hollywood. Now they are shot almost anywhere and everywhere." Some of the books for which she was the agent will be made in different parts of the world. *Only Akiko*, the book by Duncan Thorpe, will be shot in the Philippines; John Steinbeck's *The Reign of Pippin IV* will be made in France.

Both Miss Williams and Mr. Johnston are of the opinion that motion pictures are regaining their place in the sun and that this time they will be able to hold it with honor. They do not deny that there are many films being made which have little or nothing to commend them, although they command large audiences. In defense of the film industry, then, let it be said that perhaps the fault lies not with the film-makers who are as eager to make a dollar as the next fellow, but with audiences whose mental slovenliness warrants nothing better.

For an exciting, pictorial history of the movies, read (if you have not already done so) *The Movies* by Richard Griffith and Arthur Mayer. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957). The motion pictures that Miss Williams and Mr. Johnston are talking about today are

a far cry, it is obvious, from those made even less than a decade ago.

Book notes: The 1958 Children's Book Award-Winners of the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation were announced at a recent luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York as follows: "For Special Excellence in Portraying America's Past": *The Americans* by Harold Coy (Little, Brown & Co.) "For Special Excellence in Contributing to the Character Development of Children": *That Dunbar Boy* by Jean Gould (Dodd, Mead & Co.) "The Best Science Book for Youth": *Elements of the Universe* by Glenn T. Seaborg and Evans G. Valens (E. P. Dutton) "The Best Children's Science Book": *Science in Your Own Back Yard* by Elizabeth K. Cooper (Harcourt, Brace & Co.) Mr. James C. Zeder, vice president, Chrysler Corporation, gave the principal address on "Educating the Individual for a Changing World" at the luncheon. What he had to say was extremely important for all educators today. For a copy of the address write: Miss Marianne Russ, Mass Media Awards, Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, 8 West 40th Street, New York 18, N. Y.

The two books just published in the Grosset & Dunlap *Signature Books* (8-12 years) are biographies of women: *The Story of Madame Curie* by Alice Thorne; and *The Story of Edith Cavell* (the famous English nurse of World War I) by Iris Vinton.

The New York State English Council Workshop will be held this year at S.U.T.C. Plattsburgh, August 3-7. The theme, *Articulation of the English-Language Arts*, is of interest to all teachers, K-12.

Dr. Robert C. Pooley is keynote speaker and daily lecturer.

Guest consultants will discuss trends and practices in the several areas of developmental programs.

Plan for a week of recreation and study during this North Country Champlain Festival

Year.

In-service credit offered. Graduate and undergraduate credit for coincidental enrollment in college-sponsored two-week workshop, August 3-14.

For further information, write:

Dr. Mollie K. Wild

V. Pres., NYSEC

and

Director, 1959 Workshop

State University Teachers College
Plattsburgh, New York

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹



William A. Jenkins

1958's most distinguished children's books

The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare, published by Houghton Mifflin, was awarded the thirty-seventh Newbery Medal as the most distinguished children's book for 1958. *Chanticleer and the Fox* by Barbara Cooney, published by Thomas Y. Crowell Company, was awarded the twenty-second Caldecott Medal as the most outstanding American picture book of the year. The medals will be presented to the winners at the Newbery-Caldecott banquet on June 23 in Washington, D. C., during the American Library Association convention.

The Witch of Blackbird Pond is set in Wethersfield, Conn. in 1687. In a Puritan community amid fears of witchcraft, the action revolves around a sixteen year old heroine, Kit. *Chanticleer and the Fox* is Miss Cooney's adaptation of Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*.

Runners-up for the Newbery award are: *The Family Under the Bridge* by Natalie Savage Carlson (Harper); *Along Came a Dog* by Meindert DeJong (Harper); *Chucaro* by Francis Kalnay (Harcourt); and *The Perilous Road* by William O. Steele (Harcourt).

Runners-up for the Caldecott medal are: *The House That Jack Built* by Antonio Frasconi (Harcourt); *What Do You Say, Dear?* by Sesyle Joslin, illustrated by Maurice Sendak (Scott); and *Umbrella* by Taro Yashima (Viking).



Major educational events of 1958

What were the major events of 1958? Ben Brodinsky, editor of *The Teacher's Letter*, offers these ten events:

1. Congress passed the National Defense Education Act of 1958.

2. The United State Supreme Court rejected the request of the Little Rock school board for a delay in racial integration.

3. Arkansas and Virginia began the experiment of operating privately-controlled schools in communities which had been ordered to integrate their schools.

4. Arthur S. Flemming, former president of Ohio Wesleyan University, was named Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

5. U. S. Commissioner of Education Lawrence Derthick and a group of American experts on education visited the Soviet Union—making the first examination of Russian schools by Americans in four decades.

6. The U. S. Treasury ruled that teachers may deduct, when computing their Federal income taxes, those expenses which were incurred for extra education for professional growth.

7. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund published *The Pursuit of Excellence*.

8. Roger A. Freeman, an avowed critic of public school policies and practices, published *School Needs in the Decade Ahead*. (Reply: NEA's *Can Our Schools Get By With Less?*).

9. The U. S. State Department signed an agreement with the Soviet Union providing for exchanges of students, teachers, and professional workers in the arts.

10. The National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards brought together those who stress subject matter and those who stress methodology in the education of teachers—and laid plans for greater co-operation between these two groups of educators.

¹University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

This was the year American education righted itself from the jolt of the sputniks After a compulsive rush toward more science, math, and unclassifiable "space age" offerings, school systems found their balance and reaffirmed their faith in a curriculum in which the arts, citizenship, and moral values were declared to be of equal importance with utilitarian subjects

.... James Conant needled the high school to get back to "hard" subjects for the able and practical subjects for the less-academically inclined. The comprehensive high school is the thing, urged Dr. C Merit rating continued to be a hot issue, but no one discovered any practical way of pleasing the teachers (who were usually against the scheme) and some school board members (who thought it might be a good idea) The school board member, feeling his strength, spoke out through the National School Boards Association, reaffirming his belief in the public school. See the pamphlet entitled "This We Believe," prepared in conjunction with the AASA Another example of the school Boards' vigor: The National School Boards Association rapped the *Reader's Digest* for printing charges that schools are palaces and "are crushingly expensive."

... Outstanding conference of the year: on the identification and education of the academically-gifted student in American high schools, Washington, February 6 to 8

.... About 45 million children, youth, and adults were attending school, college, or some organized course The average teacher's salary was calculated as being \$4650. On top: California with an average salary of \$5,925. At the bottom, the usual Only one elementary school out of four was equipped with a centralized library Researchers still could find no evidence that would condemn the classroom with many pupils (many meaning 35 or over); but neither could they find evidence

that would show it to be desirable



American High School Today

A note from *Council-Grants* which is sent to all NCTE directors:

"Dr. James B. Conant's *American High School Today* contains many general and some specific recommendations of importance to teachers of English. Among the latter (some of which are very controversial):

1. Four years of English required for all students.
2. Three ability groups for students taking English and other required subjects.
3. Automatic passing grade in a required course for any student who works up to full capacity.
4. About half the time devoted to English should be concerned with composition. Each student should write an average of a theme a week. Themes should be corrected by the teacher.
5. No English teacher should be responsible for more than one hundred pupils. (This is in precise agreement with the NCTE recommendation.)
6. Schoolwide tests in English composition should be given in every grade. Students whose scores on the eleventh-grade test are below their ability should take a special composition course in the twelfth grade.
7. Retarded readers should be given special instruction.
8. Voluntary developmental reading programs should be available.
9. In schools of sufficient size, Advanced Placement Programs in English and other subjects should be encouraged for the top three per cent.



WEEKLY READER Children's Book Club

The May selection of the *Weekly Reader Children's Book Club* is *Champion Dog Prince Tom* by Jean Fritz and Tom Clute. The book was published by Coward-McCann.



Correction

The Bureau of Educational Research, Board of Education of the City of New York, has informed us that the reading list, *Books for Children to Read*, mentioned in the March column, is not available for general distribution. Readers are kindly requested not to write for the list.

**The children's book world**

The week of May 10 will mark the twenty-third annual celebration of the Children's Spring Book Festival sponsored by the New York *Herald Tribune*. Cash prizes of \$200 each will be awarded to the three best children's books published this spring in three age groups.

The Children's Spring Book Festival is planned to encourage the spring publication of books, and gives nation-wide publicity to the winners as well as to the twelve Honor Books named by the judges. These and other new books for boys and girls will be featured in the special Children's Spring Book Festival Issue of the *Herald Tribune Book Review* of May 10.

• • • • •

Eleanor Farjeon is the first recipient of the Catholic Library Association's Regina Medal, to be awarded annually at a special luncheon during the CLA conference to "an individual whose lifetime dedication to the highest standards of literature for children had made him an exemplar of the words of Walter de la Mare, 'only the rarest kind of best of anything is good for the young'." Miss Farjeon is the author of a number of children's books and verses and of an occasional title for adults. The medal was presented March 30 in Chicago.

• • • • •

Audio-Visual Catalog, 1959 edition, is available from Children's Reading Service, 1078 St. John's Place, Brooklyn 13, New York. The catalog is an annotated list of phonograph records, filmstrips, and rhythm band instruments. It is free to teachers, librarians, and principals if requested on official letterhead. Otherwise,

send 25 cents in coin or stamps.

• • • • •

Two articles of interest about children's literature appeared recently in *Childhood Education*. In December Harriet Bick's fascinating article on "Mr. (Eugene) Field's Christmas" appeared, and in February Joy Dawson offered some help in choosing good books for children from among the great numbers that are available today, with "Choosing Books for Young Children."

**Some useful materials**

Space Travel, 16 pp.; *Design in Everyday Living*, 13 pp.; and *Alaska*, 19 pp., all reprinted from the 1959 *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia*. These are up-to-date materials from the latest edition of the very good "home and school" encyclopedia. Single copies are free on request to the publisher.

Teachers may also wish to request a copy of *Compton's at Work in the Classroom*, the 48-page book which presents the best ways to use an encyclopedia in the classroom. Compton's also has available now a 56-frame filmstrip, "How to Use the Encyclopedia," which is accompanied by a 20-page Teaching Guide. The filmstrip is available on a 30-day loan basis or may be purchased for \$3.75. Write to F. E. Compton and Company, 1000 North Dearborn Street, Chicago 10.

• • • • •

Let's Create by Mary K. Leonard, is a booklet written primarily to encourage the elementary teacher who is interested in carrying on a creative art program. The "why" and "how" of teaching art creatively have been approached from the standpoint of child development, where the child—his attitudes and habits—is more important than the result of his work. Rather than being a how-to-do booklet, it deals with the idea of letting the child experiment in order to find out for himself. Chapters deal with Guiding Children; Painting; Murals;

Finger Painting; Clay; Other Projects; Art in School Living; and Materials. Write to Center for Educational Service, College of Education, Ohio University, Athens. Price one dollar.

• • • • •

Citizens Speak Out on School Costs, by Committee on Tax Education and School Finance, National Education Association. 63 pp. Fifty cents. A very readable and convincing booklet which shows that a breakthrough is needed on school finance—more money is needed to stop the waste of the top talent in our schools; to attract and keep the most able teachers; to finance the type of programs we need for today's complex world; to provide greater equality in school support. We can provide such quality education if we are willing, the Committee feels. It is a matter of values. Something will have to be given up for us to do so. The fallacy seems to be that we fail to believe or allow ourselves to believe that that which we can gain will be as desirable as that which we can give up.



Books for teacher

What Boys and Girls Like to Read by George W. Norvell. Silver Burdett Company, 306 pp., \$4.75. Over a period of 25 years Mr. Norvell has gathered 4,000,000 expressions of opinion from 124,000 children. With these findings he challenges many an infallible literary critic with ideas that are at once both controversial and convincing. For example, he found that of the 87 Mother Goose verses tested in grade 3, and 30 tested in grades 4 to 6, only a few have great attraction to children, most have only moderate or low attraction, and most of the rhymes praised by the critics for high literary quality rank low in children's interest. Similar analysis and findings are presented for much of the poetry which is given to children.

• • • • •

Best Books for Children. R. R. Bowker Company, 190 pp., \$2. Paperbound. Over 2,700 of the best books for children have been annotated and classified by grade and by subject, in five groups: Pre-School to 3rd Grade; Grades 4 to 6; Grades 7 to 9; Special Subjects; Indexes. Each of the entries is coded to show whether it has been recommended by the AIA, the *Children's Catalog*, and the *Library Journal*. Each title was checked with the publishers for availability and current selling price. It will be a valuable aid in selecting from the thousands of books for children which are available.



The ideal principal

What are the characteristics of the ideal principal? The Council for Administrative Leadership in New York State has released the results of a study of what teachers expect of a principal.

1. Teachers want administrators at all levels to be real leaders. They don't want their principals to lean on their authority, to pull their rank—or to spend their time shuffling papers and doing clerical work.

2. Teachers want each administrator to know what his job is—and what it isn't. They don't like the man who handles everything himself, who attempts to do everything that is thought of. Lacking a clean-cut definition, a man may—under the pressure of events—become a trouble-shooter, a do-gooder, a finisher-upper.

3. Teachers frankly want help from principals. They highly regard the man who is sensitive to their needs and who is quick and generous with help.

4. Teachers rally around a principal if he's the kind of person they respect, regardless of his authority and rank. They'll accept him if he has the personal qualities which they value in people generally.

5. Teachers expect their principals to know the answers. The teachers thought that "administrators should possess a vast amount of knowledge, covering such subjects as state laws and regulations, theories of child growth and development, recent sociological trends, and so on."



Edison Foundation awards

The 1958 winners were:

Special Excellence in Portraying America's Past: *The Americans* by Harold Coy

Special Excellence in Contributing to the Character Development of Children: *That Dunbar Boy* by Jean Gould

Best Science Book for Youth: *Elements of the Universe* by Seaborg and Volens

Best Children's Science Book: *Science in Your Own Back Yard* by Elizabeth Cooper.

**NCTE co-sponsored workshops**

University of Utah, Salt Lake City, and the Utah Council of Teachers of English. June 15-26. Theme: "Interrelating the Language Arts." Guest leader: Dr. William Dusel, San Jose State College. Further information: Dean Harold Bentley, University of Utah.

University of Georgia, Athens, and the Georgia Council of Teachers of English. July 27-August 19. Theme: "Communication in the Modern World." Director: Dr. Mary J. Tingle, University of Georgia.

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. June 22-26. Topic: "Teaching of Literature in High School." Guest leader: Dr. John C. Gerber, State University of Iowa. Director: Professor W. B. Schneider, Southern Illinois University.

Indiana University, Bloomington. July 23-August 7. Topic: "Elementary School Trends in Language Arts." Leader: Dr. Doris Holmes, Queens College. Directors: Dr. Leo Fay and Dr. Ruth Strickland, Indiana University.

Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls. June 15-July 2. Theme: "The Teaching of Writing in the Secondary School." Director: Luella B. Cook. Further information: Professor John Cowley, Iowa State Teachers College.

Boston University, June 29-July 11. Theme: "Individual Differences." Director: Dr. M. Agnella Gunn. Consultants: Margaret Early,

Mary E. Fowler, Olive S. Niles, Donald O. Durrell, and others. Further Information: Dr. M. Agnella Gunn, School of Education, Boston University.

Montana State University, Missoula. June 15-July 17. Theme: "Using Linguistics in Junior and Senior High Schools." Director: Thurston Womack, San Francisco State College. Further information: Professor Agnes V. Boner, Montana State University.

**Summer workshops and institutes**

Workshop in elementary reading, Drake University, July 20-August 7. 3 semester hours credit. Theme: "Elementary Reading Instruction for Today's Needs." Leaders: Dr. Russell Stauffer, University of Delaware, and Miss Marie C. Cuddy, Lyons and Carnahan. Director: Dr. Paul Blakely, Drake University.

Workshop conference on "Individualizing Reading Instruction." Teachers College, Columbia University, July 20-July 31. 2 points credit. Conference leader: Helen K. Mackintosh, U. S. Office of Education. For further information: Dr. Leland Jacobs, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York 27.

Twenty-first Annual Reading Conference, Pennsylvania University, June 22-26. Theme: "Reading Is Living." Guest Speakers: Roma Gans, Tasha Tudor, Laura Zirbes, and Louis Slobodkin. For further information: Dr. Lyman Hunt or Dr. George Murphy, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Penna.

1959 Annual Laboratory-Demonstration Workshop, Betts Reading Clinic, Haverford, Pennsylvania, July 20-31. Theme: "Foundations of Reading Instruction." Leaders: Dr. Emmett A. Betts and Miss Carolyn M. Welch. For further information: Registrar, The Betts Reading Clinic, Haverford, Penna.

**Junior Literary Guild Selections**

Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for May through September. In each

group the first listing is for May, the second for June, and so on.

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old:

Grandfather and I by Helen E. Buckley.

Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, \$2.75.

Futility the Tapir by Roberta Moynihan.

Viking Press, \$2.

Flippy's Flashlight by Corinna Mrs. E. P.

Dutton, \$2.50.

Everyone Waits by Mabel Watts. Abelard-Schuman, \$2.75.

Hurrah for Maxie by Peggy Gulick and

Elizabeth Dresser. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old:

The True Book of Space by Illa Podendorf.

Children's Press, \$2.

Poquito, the Little Mexican Duck by Nora

S. Unwin. David McKay, \$2.75.

My Name Is—by Lois Baker Muehl. Holiday House, \$2.95.

The Elephant That Ga-lumphed by Nanda Ward. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, \$2.75.

Norman, the Doorman by Don Freeman. Viking Press, \$3.

For boys and girls 9, 10 and 11 years old:

Red Eagle by Shannon Garst. Hastings House, \$3.

Muley-Ears, Nobody's Dog by Marguerite Henry. Rand McNally, \$2.75.

Secret of the Ron Mor Skerry by Rosalie K. Fry. E. P. Dutton, \$2.50.

Captain Ghost by Thelma Harrington Bell. Viking Press, \$2.75.

Elephant Cargo by Winifred G. Hammond. Coward-McCann, \$3.

For girls 12 to 16 years old:

Romance at Courtesy Bend by Marjory Hall. Westminster Press, \$2.95.

Modern American Career Women by Eleanor Clymer and Lillian Erlich. Dodd, Mead, \$3.

Saturday Night by Marjorie Holmes. Westminster Press, \$2.95.

Miss Gail by Helen Markley Miller. Doubleday, \$2.75.

An Edge of the Forest by Agnes Smith. Viking Press, \$3.

For boys 12 to 16 years old:

Tree House Island by Scott Corbett. Little, Brown, \$3.

Hold Back the Hunter by Dale White. John Day, \$3.50.

Scavengers in Space by Alan E. Nourse. David McKay, \$2.75.

The Face in the Stone by Elsie Reif Ziegler. Longmans, Green, \$2.75.

The Doctor Who Dared: William Osler by Iris Noble. Julian Messner, \$2.95.



Carnival of Books

Here is the schedule for the "Carnival of Books" for May and June as broadcast over WMAQ, Chicago. Check your local radio station for day and time of broadcast.

May 17—*Pinky Pye* by Eleanor Estes (Harcourt)

May 24—*The Americans* by Harold Coy (Little)

May 31—*The Tower Treasure* by Anne Molley (Hastings)

June 7—*Twelve Days 'Til Trenton* by John M. Duncan (Whittlesey)

June 14—*Escape to Freedom* by Ruth Fosdick Jones (Random)

June 21—*Behind the Zuni Masks* by Val Gendron (Longmans)

June 28—*Famous Pirates of the New World* by A. B. C. Whipple (Random)



Mabel F. Altstetter

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Edited by MABEL F. ALTSTETTER

Mabel F. Altstetter, Chairman, Department of English, School of Education, Miami University (Ohio); lecturer and writer in the field of CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND READING; Editor, Adventuring with Books, 1956.

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

Fiction

Hunters' Hideout. By Mebane Holoman Burgwyn. Pictures by W. T. Mars. Lippincott, 1959. \$2.75. (9-12).



Hunters' Hideout

A swiftly paced story of quiet adventure that reaches a believable climax in the capture of a murder suspect.

Many boys will identify themselves with Mike and Cal Hunter who hide out in a woods each day near their home for a month rather than go to a new school where they were rejected by the other pupils. The adventure of life in the woods and along the river is satisfying and the reader is conscious of the gradual maturing of the boys who make the discovery

that running away from trouble is not the way to end it. The book has its setting in North Carolina which the author knows well but it could be anywhere. A

The Red Dory. By Hazel Wilson. Little, Brown, 1959. \$3.00. (10-14).



The Red Dory

This is a revised sea story which was first published twenty years ago. The revision is smoother than the original but retains the vigor and hard reality of the fine tale of the Maine coast. The life is not for weaklings and Donald learns from his grandfather, Captain Eben, to stand up to hardships. The red dory played a

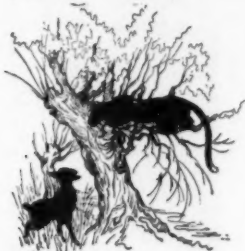


Margaret Mary Clark

part in all the adventures that Donald had. There is not a sentimental line in the whole book but there is warmth of understanding and sharing.

A

An Edge of the Forest. By Agnes Smith. Illustrated by Roberta Moynihan. Viking, 1959. \$3.00. (11-15).



An Edge of the Forest

This book will probably not appeal to all children but many will enjoy the story of animals of the forest who live precariously in constant fear of danger, hunger, and even death. Only the sensitive will respond to the inner meaning that comes from watching a fearful and helpless little black lamb, driven into the forest by a mad dog, affect the lives of many creatures as a young leopardess protects her. The lamb's helplessness and constant preoccupation with death may have meaning only for adults but all will respond to the beautifully written, often poetic, narrative.

A

Land of Foam. By Ivan Yefremov. Houghton, 1959. \$3.50. (12 up).



Land of Foam

This novel was first published in Russia.

Its author is a scholar in the field of archeology and related areas. The movement is often wooden and the story seems at times contrived. There is however much to be learned about the ancient world, especially its art, as one follows the fortunes of a young Greek who is taken into slavery and is carried into Crete, Egypt and then escapes to wander with his companions through wild Africa. There is little available in this field for young people and one can endure the cumbersome style for the sake of the rewarding account of life in the ancient world.

A

Picture Books and Easy Books

Pika and the Roses. By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Pictures by Kurt Wiese. Pantheon, 1959. \$2.75. (4-7).



Pika and the Roses

Elizabeth Coatsworth has a way with words and Pika, the little rock rabbit or cony, really lives as he goes through the usual experiences of helping his family to gather and dry hay for winter. The ancient enemy of rock rabbits, the weasel, sets off a fine illustration of family solidarity. A good story based on facts. Wiese's pictures as usual are superb.

A

Stop it Moppit! By Geraldine Ross. Pictures by Kurt Werth. Whittlesey, 1959. \$2.25. (4-8).

A hilarious story told in rhyme about a rabbit who was always doing something that displeased his elders. His triumph at the end is good for many a hearty laugh.

A

Listen to My Seashell. By Charlotte Steiner. Knopf, 1959. \$3.25 reinforced. (3-6).

Charlotte Steiner has added *Sound* to her successful books *Touch* and *Color*. Familiar sounds of everyday are set forth in rhyme with delightful pictures.

A

Once Upon a Holiday. By Liliam Moore. Pictures by Gjoia Fiammenghi. Abingdon, 1959. \$2.50. (5-8).



Once Upon a Holiday

Twelve simple but interesting stories about twelve holidays. All have appeared in *Humpty Dumpty's Magazine*. A

Little Bruin Keeps House. Pictures and story by Haaken Christensen. Abingdon, 1959. \$1.75. (4-7).



Little Bruin Keeps House

A charming, easy to read fantasy about a small bear involved in everyday experiences. Translated from the Norwegian by Siri Andrews. A

The Cooking Book. By Betty Miles. Pictures by Jo Lowry. Knopf, 1959. \$2.75, reinforced. (3-6).

Simple things to make such as gelatin and cinnamon toast. Slightly more complicated

dishes are suggested to be made with mother's help. For the child who loves to be in the kitchen. Pictures help make directions clear.

A

The Moon Jumpers. By Janice May Udry. Pictures by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1959. \$2.50. (3-6).



A distinguished picture book full of the enchantment of a moonlit summer night by the author of *A Tree is Nice*. Maurice Sendak is at his best as he catches the moon glow on houses, and trees and barefoot dancing children.

A

Poquito. Story and pictures by Nora Unwin. McKay, 1959. \$2.75. (5-8).

The story of a little Mexican duck, his



Poquito

birth, his flight, and his rescue by a humble Mexican family. Lovely pictures make the Mexican village and its people live.

A

Jannot, A French Rabbit. By Mireille Marokvia. Drawings by Artur Marokvia. Lippincott, 1959. \$3.00. (6-10).



A newcomer to American publishing has given us a lovely story of a French village and its surroundings as seen through the eyes of a lost rabbit. Charming in both story and pictures.

A

Miscellaneous

Ingo: The Story of My Otter. By Walter von Sanden. Illustrated with photographs. Longmans, 1959. \$2.50. (9-12).



Ingo: The Story of My Otter

This book translated from the German and printed in English has the rich flavor of a personal experience in observing at close range a wild otter which was a family pet. The understanding of the otter's wild nature and the respect for him as a creature with certain rights which people should not intrude upon emerge clearly in this well-written account. A

Storytelling. By Ruth Tooze. Prentice-Hall, 1959.

Mrs. Tooze is a master storyteller. She has perfected her art by thousands of experiences with all ages of children in many places. In this book she shares what she has learned about the ancient art of storytelling. She gives in full twenty stories that are right to tell and adds ninety-three pages of bibliography of sources for all kinds of stories. A valuable book.

A

Social Studies

The American Revolution

The Great Declaration. By Henry Steele Commager. Illustrated with reproductions, and drawings by Donald Bolognese. Bobbs-Merrill, 1958. \$2.75. (11-up).

"How the fundamental charter of our liberty came into being" is a superlative combination of narrative history, significant letters and documents preceding the achievement of the United States "birth certificate," the Declaration of Independence. Represented are letters from John and Samuel Adams and Jefferson, the Proclamation of Rebellion, King George III's proclamation of America's state of rebellion, excerpts from Tom Paine, Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration including the clause against slavery, and the final Declaration. The outstanding organization of material, and the wealth of original sources make this an invaluable supplement to the study of the Revolutionary period. Many of the illustrations are reproductions of woodcuts and paintings of the times. On the end-pages are drawings of uniforms of many different regiments and companies that fought in the Revolution, and they are striking in their variety. C

The American Revolution. By Bruce Bliven, Jr. Illustrated by Albert Orbaan. Random House, 1958. \$1.95. (10-15) (Landmark Books).

It was John Adams' belief that "The Revo-

lution was in the minds and hearts of people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775 ... before a drop of blood was shed. The developments of these years, the actual causes, the terrifying economic problems of the small new nation, and the important battles of the war are graphically presented. This is very readable and well presented historical background material. C

The Marquis de Lafayette: Bright Sword for Freedom. By Hodding Carter. Illustrated by Mimi Korach. Random House, 1958. \$1.95. (10-15) (World Landmark Books.)

Lafayette's dedication to man's freedom led him to fight for this cause in America as well as in his own beloved country. His part in the American Revolution is richly detailed in this book, as is the loyalty and gratitude of the American people when Lafayette suffered for his part in the French Revolution. His selfless service to his homeland and to America offers an inspiring picture to students of the Revolutionary period. C

The Westward Expansion

Gold in California. By Paul I. Wellman. Illustrated by Lorence Bjorklund. Houghton, 1958. \$1.95. (11-15) (North Star Books.)



Gold in California

The Gold Rush played a significant part in changing California from a Spanish province to a wealth producing and heavily settled state. The historic details of this dramatic period, from the discovery of gold at Sutter's Fort until the linking of east and west through the Transcontinental Railroad, offers an absorbing narrative. Of particular interest are the methods

of mining that were employed, and the changing caliber of men who journeyed to the gold fields, which later required such ruthless justice to cope with the lawless elements seeking to profit by other men's labor. Versatile Lorence Bjorklund's illustrations are of exceptional quality and vitality. C

Jedediah Smith; Trail Blazer of the West. By Hal G. Evarts. Illustrated by Bernard Krige-stein. Putnam, 1958. \$3.00 (12-16).

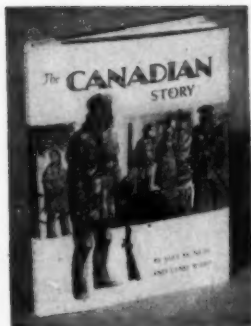
"With a Bible and his rifle and sackful of traps Jed Smith helped build a wilderness into a mighty nation." The nine years he spent exploring and trapping were a supreme test of



endurance, as he fought with hostile Indians, and faced the natural hazards of desert and wilderness. Jedediah Smith's greatest achievement was that he led the first overland expedition to California. His personal integrity made him one of the greatest of the "mountain men," and this action-filled biography effectively portrays the qualities which made him a leader of men, and which ultimately cost him his life. In a last gallant action he rode off into the desert seeking water for his parched little band and died at the hands of the Indians. C

A Miscellany

The Canadian Story. By May McNeer. Illustrated by Lynd Ward, Farrar. 1958. \$4.25. (9-14).



Presented in the same handsome format that distinguished *The Mexican Story*, the team of May McNeer and Lynd Ward high-light in thirtyfour brief chapters Canadian history from earliest explorations to the Seaway project, with the greatest emphasis on earlier heroes and history. This is a country's story vividly told and prolifically illustrated with fine four color lithographs and black-and-white drawings. Excellent for supplementary reading. Not indexed. C

The Land and People of Scotland. By Frieda M. Buchanan. Illustrated with photographs. Lippincott, 1958. \$2.95. (Portraits of the Nations Series.) (11-16).

Scotland "is a land with more than a thousand years of recorded history," and her story, written by a Scot, encompasses a wide field of its history, geography, social and industrial growth, and there are additional chapters on the games, songs, food, tartans, and kilts. The author writes with warmth and understanding of her land and people, and makes a genuine contribution to this fine series. C

Roads. By Fon W. Boardman, Jr. Illustrated. Walck, 1958. \$3.50. (10-14).

The wide scope of this excellent book on roads makes it an invaluable addition on the subject. Beginning with the primitive pathways made by man and animals, it describes the roadways of ancient civilizations, and their ways of building. Chapters are devoted to Roman

roads, those of the Incas, of Europe, and North America from their earliest development. There are fine cross sections of roads showing their construction, including that of an old Roman road. A final chapter on *Modern Roads Around the World* offers impressive statistics on road



Roads

mileage and use in many countries. Illustrated with fine maps, drawings, and photographs, this book suggests supplementary use for many periods in history. C

Community Studies—For Younger Readers

Let's Go to the Telephone Company. By Naomi Buchheimer. Illustrated by Barbara Corrigan. Putnam, 1958. (7-9) \$1.95 each.

Let's Go Exploring Your Community Series is proving most useful with children from seven to nine, and covers an even broader age range in meeting topical needs. *Let's Go to the Telephone Company* explains the use of home equipment, the intricacies of wires and cables, the central office, how long distance calls are made, and the many kinds of workers in a telephone company. *Let's Go to a Television Station* by the same author gives equally detailed information about what is involved in the production of a television program.

Let's Go to a City Hall by Louis Wolfe introduces children to the various types of town and city government, their operation, and the services such as water, transportation, schools, etc. provided for the citizens. Mr. Wolfe's *Let's Go to a Planetarium* describes what visitors might see both in equipment and at the sky

show. Each title is attractively illustrated and contains a useful glossary of technical terms.

C

New Editions and Reissues

The Four Corners of the World. Written and illustrated by Roger Duvoisin. Knopf, 1948. \$4.00 (10-13).

The "unbelievable adventure of Francisco Pizarro" the young Spanish swineherd turned explorer who conquered Peru, is dramatically told in story and brilliantly colored illustrations, and ends with the treacherous killing of Athahualpa.

C

Stories of Our American Patriotic Songs. By Dr. John Henry Lyons. Illustrated by Jacob Landau. Vanguard, 1940, 1942. \$3.50. (9-up).

Here are stories about the origins of America's most loved patriotic songs ranging



Stories of Our American Patriotic Songs from the *Star Spangled Banner* to *America the Beautiful*, together with the words and music. Large black-and-white drawings throughout the book are outstanding in quality and design.

C

Free to WRITERS seeking a book publisher

Two fact-filled illustrated brochures reveal the behind-the-scenes story of subsidy publishing, and tell how to publish your book, get 40% royalties, national publicity, promotion and advertising.

We publish every kind of book, from the little volume of verse and the first novel to the scholarly study and the critical essay. Our special academic imprint, **Exposition-University Books**, is reserved for deserving scholarly works. These books reflect the high editorial standards and quality of design and production which have won the acceptance of libraries, schools, booksellers and critics.

Your inquiries and manuscripts are invited.

An editorial report will be furnished promptly without any obligation to you. For detailed information and copies of our free literature, please write to Ernest Eckert, Editorial Dept.

Exposition Press, 386 4th Ave., N. Y. 16

26th Writers' Conference

July 20-August 7, 1959

NOVEL — A. B. Guthrie, Jr. and Virginia Sorensen

NON FICTION — Stewart Holbrook

SHORT STORY — William Peden

POETRY — Walker Gibson

JUVENILE WRITING — Shannon Garst and Virginia Sorensen

TV DRAMA — Ellingwood Kay

POPULAR SCIENCE — Harold Walton

MARKETING PROBLEMS — Staff

Address Inquiries to

MARGARET ROBB

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Boulder, Colorado

FOR THE TEACHER OF ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS

PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH—A magazine devoted entirely to the teaching of the elementary language arts. Articles on reading, grammar, spelling, writing, and children's authors, as well as special columns of book reviews and news of the profession. Published monthly, October-May. \$4.00 per year.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

LANGUAGE ARTS FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN—Volume II in the NCTE Curriculum Series, this book is used throughout the country as a guide to planning the elementary language arts program. Sections on the relationship of language to child development; listening, speaking, writing, and reading; units interrelating all four language arts; characteristics of a good language arts program. 431 pages. 1954. \$4.00 (\$2.60 to NCTE members)

READING LIST

ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS—For kindergarten through grade 6. Prepared by librarians and teachers. Includes titles, annotations, publishers, prices, and suggested age level. \$0.90 (includes 1958 supplement) \$.25—1958 supplement only

PAMPHLETS

TEACHING AIDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—This 96-page pamphlet directs the teacher to bulletin board materials, films and filmstrips, recordings, tape recordings, tests, magazines, reprints and free helps, and reading lists. Sponsored by the Illinois Association of Teachers of English. \$1.00

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LANGUAGE GROWTH—Discusses the equipment a child must have for learning language skills, and what effect the home, school, and community have upon his language growth. Bibliographies included. 32 pages. \$.60

READINESS FOR READING AND THE RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS—Discusses readiness for the initial learning, and for each new step applied to reading, speech, writing, spelling, vocabulary, and handwriting. 60 pages. \$.65

REPRINTS

CREATIVE WAYS IN TEACHING THE LANGUAGE ARTS—Portfolio of 14 four-page leaflets, mainly reprints of popular **ELEMENTARY ENGLISH** articles. Includes such articles as "An Elementary Book Fair," "Pupils, Teachers and Creative Dramatics," "Purposeful Writing," and "Spelling and the Language Arts." \$1.00

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

704 SOUTH SIXTH STREET CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS



NCTE's
49th

ANNUAL
MEETING

DENVER

NOVEMBER
26-28

COSMOPOLITAN
HOTEL
(Headquarters)

BROWN PALACE
SHIRLEY SAVOY

- Discussion Groups
- Talks by famous literary figures and leaders in the profession
- Exhibits of the newest teaching materials
- More information in the fall

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH**

704 SOUTH SIXTH STREET
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

BOOKS TO MAKE READERS

from
LITTLE,
BROWN



A ROUSING MYSTERY

Tree House Island

By SCOTT CORBETT

Illustrated by Gordon Hansen. Two suspicious strangers, posing as ornithologists, turn Tree House Island into a scary spot and the boys of Goose Harbor plunge into unexpected danger in order to expose them. *An Atlantic Book.* 10-14. \$3.00

BEWITCHING HUMOR

Clancy's Witch

By EMILIE WARREN McLEOD

Illustrated in two colors by Lisl Weil. The author of *The Seven Remarkable Bears* tells about a witch who has to un-haunt a house. Children who read about Clancy's witch are sure to have as much of a whirl with her as Clancy did himself. *An Atlantic Book.* 7-11. \$3.00

Both books cloth bound and Smyth sewn.

LITTLE, BROWN & COMPANY
BOSTON

AAK C J AAK C J AAK C J AAK C J AAK C J AAK

BORZOI BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

*We have two spring books by the master
of the magic of strange and beautiful words*

WALTER DE LA MARE

This classic storyteller's version of the best-loved tale of **JACK AND THE BEANSTALK** has now been illustrated by Joseph Low in color and with modern distinction. The format is attractively tall. More than one old favorite, including *Dick Whittington*, *Snow-White*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*, is presented in his inimitable style in **TALES TOLD AGAIN**. Originally published a good many years ago under the title **TOLD AGAIN**, this completely reset edition is freshly illustrated with vivid drawings by Alan Howard.

Books for all ages to enjoy and cherish, and Walter de la Mare asks only, as he did in the "Introduction" to his earlier **READINGS**, that, "If we try, then, to see in our own mind and imagination what the writer saw in his, to share his thoughts and all that he hoped to express, and to hearken after the very sound of the words he chose with care, we can do no better. He has found the reader he longed for and we a friend."

COME HITHER—\$7.50 CLOTH

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK—\$3.00 REINFORCED

TALES TOLD AGAIN—\$3.00 CLOTH

THE THREE ROYAL MONKEYS—\$3.50 CLOTH

Our illustrated catalog has news of all our spring books. It is free, of course, and will be sent on request.

(501 Madison Avenue, New York 22)

AAK ALFRED A. KNOPF, PUBLISHER AAK

VIKING JUNIOR BOOKS

NORMAN THE DOORMAN

Story and Pictures
by **DON FREEMAN**



A beguiling mouse makes a mobile in his studio — a renovated knight's helmet — and realizes his great dream. Full-color. *Ages 4-7 \$3.00*

FUTILITY THE TAPIR

Story and Pictures by **ROBERTA MOYNIHAN**

A tale of a torpid tapir who thinks she will GET UP, but at day's end decides tomorrow will be soon enough! *Ages 4-7 — and adults! \$2.00*

THE GROUNDHOG AND HIS SHADOW

Story and Pictures by **KURT WIESE**

Tired of the fuss every February 2nd, Mr. Groundhog sold his shadow, with nearly disastrous results. Wonderful pictures! *Ages 4-7 \$2.25*

BAMBINO GOES HOME

Story and Pictures by **GEORGES SCHREIBER**

Bambino the clown shows an American boy in Italy that circus and candy are understood in any language. Glowing colors. *Ages 6-9 \$3.00*

THE LONG-NOSED PRINCESS

By **PRISCILLA HALLOWELL**

Illustrated by Rita Fava

Even birds who perched on her nose loved Felicity — but her prince learned the hard way! A gay spoof on fairy tales. *Ages 6-10 \$2.00*

A SANTO FOR PASQUALITA

By **ANN NOLAN CLARK**

Illustrated by Mary Villarejo

An orphan finds a home, and her joy knows no bounds when at long last she is given a carving of her own patron saint. *Ages 7-10 \$2.75*

THE TENEMENT TREE

Written and Illustrated by **KATE SEREDY**

Tino's fancy transforms drabness into beauty, but Papa disapproves, until he realizes that Tino has a great gift. *Ages 7-10 \$3.00*

Send for complete free illustrated catalogue.

THE VIKING PRESS

625 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.

FUN, FANTASY & FOLKLORE

from **LITTLE, BROWN**



THE

Lion's Whiskers

By **RUSSELL DAVIS**

and **BRENT ASHABRANNER**

Illustrated by James Teason. From High Africa come these forty-one entertaining Ethiopian folk tales collected by two Americans who heard them straight from tribal storytellers. 12 up. **\$3.00**



The Adventures of Rinaldo

By **ISABELLA HOLT**

Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. This richly humorous tale of knights and their valiant deeds, wicked villains, a barefoot bride, and a troop of performing animals centers about quixotic Rinaldo, funniest knight of all. An Atlantic Book. 10-14. **\$3.00**

Both books clothbound and Smyth sewn

LITTLE, BROWN & COMPANY
BOSTON

